4A(624-12)

V. I. LENIN

PÁGINAS ESCOGIDAS

EL PARTIDO BOLCHEVIQUE EN ACCIÓN

(1904-1914)

TOMO SEGUNDO

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL
SECCIÓN FONDO GENERAL

EDICIONES EUROPA-AMÉRICA
PARIS

librería SALVAT
AGUSTINAS
SANTIAGO, CHILE
N.º 6002

PÁGINAS ESCOGIDAS

V. I. LENIN

PÁGINAS ESCOGIDAS

EL PARTIDO BOLCHEVIQUE EN ACCIÓN

(1904-1914)

TOMO SEGUNDO

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL
SECCIÓN GENERAL

EDICIONES EUROPA-AMÉRICA
75, RUE DE LA ROQUETTE
PARIS

ADVERTENCIA DEL EDITOR

La presente edición del segundo tomo de "Páginas escogidas" de Lenin, ha sido traducida del francés y cuidadosamente revisada con el texto ruso.

Las introducciones y notas explicativas han sido tomadas de la edición francesa redactada por P. Pascal; además se han adjuntado algunas de la última edición rusa del Instituto Lenin.

Las notas de Lenin están firmadas: (L.). Las demás son de la Redacción.

INDICE

Páginas.

Dos tácticas 7

¿Debemos organizar la Revolución? 27

La socialdemocracia y el gobierno revolucionario provisional 43

La dictadura revolucionaria democrática del proletariado y de los campesinos 70

Dos tácticas de la socialdemocracia en la revolución democrática 86

El boicot de la Duma Buliguin y la insurrección 102

¡Discutid sobre la táctica, pero dad consignas claras! 119

Socialismo y Anarquía 123

Partido socialista y revolucionarios sin-partido. 131

La revolución rusa y los deberes del proletariado 144

El boicot 166

Las enseñanzas de la insurrección de Moscú.... 182

La guerra de guerrillas 196

La socialdemocracia y los acuerdos electorales. 217

Sobre la cuestión de la revolución "nacional" 22
Contra el boicot (Notas de un publicista socialdemócrata) 23
Partido obrero y religión 25
La liquidación de los liquidadores 27
Sobre la fracción de los "otzovistas" y de los "constructores de Dios" 29
Notas de un publicista 30

DOS TACTICAS

Todos los revolucionarios comprendieron que el gran movimiento huelguistico que en julio y agosto de 1903 se había extendido por todo el sur de Rusia era como un prólogo, más o menos lejano, de la revolución. En el curso del año 1904 la guerra ruso-japonesa, con sus derrotas, la desorganización de la producción y del mercado y la incapacidad y la corrupción del régimen autocrático, puestos una vez más de manifiesto, hizo desbordar el movimiento.

El descontento crecia en el seno de todas las clases. La burguesia liberal no temía ya expresar su descontento por medio de protestas pùblicas con ocasión de las reuniones de sus sociedades y en las sesiones de las municipalidades.

La ejecución del ministro del Interior von Plehve por el socialista-revolucionario F. Sazónov, el 15 de julio de 1904, hizo comprender incluso a la burocracia nuevo ministro, Sviatópolk Mirski, declaró que a partir de ese momento el gobierno confiaba en la opinión pública. La "era de la confianza" comenzó. Las represiones fueron atenuadas, pero no por eso el movimiento de oposición disminuyó. A fines de octubre, la Liga de la Liberación (Osvobojdénie) *decidió organizar a través de toda Rusia, con ocasión del cuadragésimo aniversario de la reforma judicial, una "campaña de banquetes" en los cuales se pronunciarían discursos reclamando un régimen constitucional. Un Congreso de las municipalidades urbanas y rurales, primero autorizado, después suspendido, se reunió, no obstante, en San Petersburgo, del 6 al 8 de noviembre, y formuló las reivindicaciones "democráticas": libertad de conciencia, de palabra, de reunión y de prensa, supresión de las castas, igualdad política y representación popular, no haciendo mención ni de la distribución de la tierra a los campesinos ni de la suerte de los obreros. El gobierno no reaccionó.*

Comenzaban a estallar motines campesinos, al principio a causa de los llamamientos a filas de los reservistas. En fin, en diciembre, se declararon en huelga decenas de millares de obreros en Bakú para hacer triunfar reivindicaciones puramente políticas, como la libertad de asociación, la convocatoria de una Asamblea constituyente y el término de la guerra.

En San Petersburgo, la Reunión de los obreros industriales de Rusia fundada, como se ha visto (¿Qué hacer?, notas) por instigación del policía Zubátov para canalizar el descontento obrero, se transformaba, por la fuerza de las cosas, en una organización revolucionaria. Los discursos que se pronunciaban en la misma denunciaban los crímenes del régimen. Esta organización alentó desde el principio la idea de la huelga: el 28 de diciembre, en una asamblea de sus 11 secciones, convocada con ocasión del despido de la fábrica de Putilov de cuatro obreros miembros de la Reunión, su director, el pope Gapón, declaraba llegado el momento de pasar a los actos. El 3 de enero cesaba el trabajo en la fábrica Putilov; del 4 al 6 la huelga se extendía a las principales fábricas de la ciudad que ocupaban de 2 a 7.000 obreros cada una; la principal reivindicación era la jornada de ocho horas; el 7 paraban las pequeñas fábricas; el 8 la huelga era general. Los locales de las secciones de la Reunión estaban constantemente atestados de obreros; Gapón era el héroe de la muchedumbre y todo el mundo repetía con él: "¡Vamos al zar! ¡Si se niega, no habrá más zar!" El texto de la petición que se había de presentar era leído, aprobado, corregido, completado por la muchedumbre. El 9 por la mañana, en un verdadero éxtasis religioso, los cortejos partían de todas las barriadas obreras para dirigirse hacia el centro de la ciudad. Centenares de miles de pobres gentes habían salido a la calle. Pero varios regimientos estaban apostados en los principales pasos: las salvas de fusilería, las cargas a sablazos hicieron centenares de víctimas desde la 1 y media hasta las 4 de la tarde. Las últimas descargas tuvieron lugar en la plaza misma del Palacio de Invierno. Por la noche, en la barriada de Vasili Ostrov, fueron construidas barricadas y ocupada una imprenta, en la cual se compusieron e imprimieron en el acto proclamas.

Esta jornada debía ser histórica: era la primera de

la revolución. La confianza en el zar había muerto. Todos los obreros, hasta los más atrasados, juraron continuar el combate hasta el fin. La proclama citada en el artículo de Lenin, que damos a continuación, improvisada por obreros, es un documento que, entre otros muchos, da fé de ello.

El "domingo sangriento" no era un episodio accidental, sino que tenía profundas raíces económicas y políticas. Así se explica el eco inmediato y general que tuvo en provincias. Sin acuerdo previo, tan pronto llegaba la noticia a una ciudad, los obreros abandonaban el trabajo y presentaban reivindicaciones idénticas; jornada de ocho horas, contra las horas extraordinarias, supresión de las multas. En Varsovia, los combates entre los obreros y las tropas duraron ocho días, se alzaron barricadas, los almacenes de armas fueron saqueados; estos acontecimientos fueron seguidos por el levantamiento de todo el proletariado de Polonia. En Kovno, cesó el trabajo en las fábricas y en los talleres de los ferrocarriles a la vez. En Riga, los obreros fueron un momento dueños de la ciudad. En Yekaterinoslav, Kiev, Tiflis, Batum, hubo encuentros con la policía. Incluso en Saratov, centro agrícola y comercial más bien que industrial, los ferroviarios se unieron al movimiento, que arrastró también a los empleados y a los estudiantes. Durante el mes de enero se contaron en Rusia más de 600.000 huelguistas, y en muchos sitios, por la resistencia armada de los obreros a la tropa, las huelgas tomaron el carácter de insurrección.

Ante este movimiento obrero, inmenso y espontáneo, ¿cuál era la actitud de la socialdemocracia? En Rusia trató, tardíamente y sin éxito, de desempeñar un papel de organizador en San Petersburgo; los resultados fueron mejores en Polonia, en las provincias bálticas y en algunas ciudades del interior. Pero la escisión entre bolcheviques y mencheviques se hacía ya sentir cruelmente: en San Petersburgo había tres grupos concurrentes, uno de los cuales se llamaba "de conciliación", y de ellos el más fuerte, el de los mencheviques, no contaba más que 1.200 afiliados.

En efecto, entre los directores residentes en el extranjero la división se acentuaba cada día. Los líderes bolcheviques separados del Comité central y del Consejo del partido después de haberlo sido de la Iskra, *pero*

fuertes a consecuencia del apoyo de muchos comités que propagaban activamente su consigna: convocatoria inmediata del III Congreso. Una "oficina de los comités de la mayoría" los agrupaba contra las autoridades oficiales del partido, que se oponían a la reunión del Congreso. No les faltaba más que un órgano propio en frente de la Iskra menchevista; el 22 de diciembre de 1904 aparecía en Ginebra el primer número de Vperiod (¡Adelante!), fundado por Lenin y sus amigos. En virtud de ello, la ruptura se consumaba y se hacía pública.

En presencia de los acontecimientos, bolcheviques y mencheviques se encontraban en desacuerdo no solamente acerca de las cuestiones de organización interior, sino sobre la táctica a seguir.

La redacción de la Iskra había dirigido en octubre de 1904 una circular a las organizaciones del partido en la cual exponía un plan de campaña cuya idea esencial, debida a Axelrod, era la siguiente:

"Hasta aquí se han organizado manifestaciones que agrupaban a todos los elementos democráticos contra el absolutismo, contra la guerra; ha llegado el momento de imaginar un tipo superior de manifestaciones que "opongan concretamente el proletariado revolucionario a la burguesía liberal como dos fuerzas políticas independientes". Las próximas sesiones de los ziemstvos provinciales (Diputaciones provinciales) ofrecían precisamente la ocasión para formular reivindicaciones constitucionales: "hay que aprovechar la ocasión por medio de la presión de las masas que reclaman la libertad política, excitar a los ziemstvos a formular estas reivindicaciones en una forma clara y categórica que no permita ningún equívoco, que no deje la puerta abierta a ninguna retirada". Es preciso exponer a estos ziemstvos "las exigencias políticas del proletariado revolucionario, obligarles a sostenerlas para que tengan el derecho de hablar en nombre del pueblo", a saber: la convocatoria de una Asamblea constituyente elegida por el sufragio universal, secreto, igual y directo". "Los burgueses liberales son los enemigos de nuestro enemigo, y, por eso mismo, hasta cierto punto, nuestros aliados: es preciso alentarles, empujarles a adherirse a las reivindicaciones que presenta el proletariado guiado por la socialdemocracia". Pero hay que abstenerse "de querer, con ayuda de medidas enérgicas de

intimidación, obligar a los ziemistvos o a los otros intérpretes de la oposición burguesa a dar, bajo la influencia del pánico, la promesa formal de hacer oir nuestras exigencias al gobierno", pues, eso sería hacer el juego de la reacción.

¿Cómo llegar prácticamente al resultado perseguido? En las localidades que ofrecen un terreno favorable, los directores del partido deben examinar con los miembros del mismo la idea de una intervención para reclamar la elección de una Constituyente libremente elegida. Un "grupo de organización" debe elaborar un proyecto de resolución en este sentido e insertarlo en una declaración destinada a ser remitida al ziemstvo en cuestión. Después debe elegirse una "comisión ejecutiva" y emprender una amplia agitación entre los obreros sobre esta base a fin de que la gestión proyectada sea "la expresión real de sus propias aspiraciones, de sus propios deseos". Esta petición no debe ser definitivamente decidida más que en el caso de que la agitación se vea coronada por el éxito. En este caso, el mejor procedimiento a adoptar será una manifestación de obreros lo más numerosa posible (condición indispensable) ante el local en que esté reunido el ziemstvo, el día en que éste deba discutir las reivindicaciones políticas a dirigir al gobierno: "una parte de los manifestantes penetrará en la sala y, en el momento oportuno, un orador elegido a este efecto pedirá a la asamblea permiso para dar lectura a la declaración de los obreros. En caso de negativa, el orador protestará enérgicamente contra la actitud de una asamblea que habla en nombre del pueblo y, sin embargo, no quiere escuchar la voz de los verdaderos representantes del mismo". Por otra parte, "para evitar que la aparición de varios millares de obreros ante el edificio en que estén reunidos los consejeros y de varias decenas o centenas en la sala misma suscite entre ellos un terror pánico, a consecuencia de lo cual serían capaces de ponerse bajo la protección vergonzosa de la policía y de los cosacos", la comisión ejecutiva "prevendrá de antemano a los consejeros liberales de la manifestación proyectada y de su verdadero objeto. Además deberá tratar de llegar a un cierto acuerdo con los miembros del ala izquierda de la oposición burguesa y asegurarse, si no su apoyo activo, al menos su simpatía".

Si este método de la manifestación ante y en el local

del ziemstvo no es aplicable sin correr el riesgo de "comprometer nuestro primer ensayo de este género". el grupo de organización recurrirá a otros procedimientos, que pondrá antes a discusión entre los miembros del partido. "Cuando menos... se puede recurrir al envío por correo de la declaración de un gran número de ejemplares de la misma en la sola domicilio de los consejeros, o a la distribución de un de sesiones". No es el efecto exterior lo que hay que perseguir, sino "el desenvolvimiento sistemático de la conciencia y de la actividad del proletariado".

Tal es el "plan" que Lenin critica y ridiculiza, considerándolo como una obra maestra de oportunismo, en un folleto especial escrito en Ginebra, en noviembre de 1904.

No es con vistas a la oposición liberal que debe obrar el proletariado, sino con vistas al gobierno; no es ante los municipios donde deben hacerse manifestaciones, sino ante los edificios de la policía y de la censura; ante las prisiones; no es en amedrentar a la opinión burguesa que debe esforzarse, sino en agrupar las fuerzas obreras para la insurrección. "El deber de la clase obrera consiste en extender y reforzar su organización y decuplar su agitación entre las masas, aprovechando la menor vacilación del gobierno, propagando la idea de la insurrección, explicando su necesidad por el fracaso de todas las "peticiones" basadas condenadas de antemano al fracaso".

La jornada del 9 de enero y la racha de huelgas que la siguió debían decidir definitivamente entre estas "dos tácticas". Pero ya antes de esta fecha el "plan de campaña municipal" les había parecido a los mencheviques mismos que se hallaba en retraso con respecto al movimiento.

Los acontecimientos, al precipitarse, llevaban a un terreno concreto la cuestión planteada por Lenin. ¿Qué hacer?: la de la preparación de la insurrección. Ya Mártov, en un artículo aparecido en la Iskra el 15 de marzo de 1904, había calificado de utopía la idea de Lenin y afirmado en substancia que es posible prepararse para la insurrección, pero que la insurrección no se prepara. Martinov, en su folleto Dos dictaduras aparecido poco antes del 9 de enero, apoyaba con razonamientos nuevos una tesis análoga.

El artículo siguiente, publicado el 1 de febrero de

1905 en el número 6 de Vperiod, *aunque hace alusión al "plan de campaña municipal", está principalmente consagrado al problema que en aquel instante era ya de actualidad: la insurrección y su preparación* (1).

Desde el comienzo del movimiento obrero de masas en Rusia, es decir, desde hace próximamente diez años, existe entre los socialdemócratas profundos desacuerdos sobre las cuestiones de táctica. Como se sabe, son estos desacuerdos los que dieron origen en los últimos años del siglo a la tendencia del economismo, como consecuencia de lo cual el partido se dividió en dos alas: el ala oportunista (*Raboche Dielo*) y el ala revolucionaria (la antigua *Iskra*) (2).

Pero, el oportunismo socialdemócrata de Rusia se distinguía del oportunismo occidental por varios rasgos originales. Reflejaba con gran relieve el punto de vista, o, mejor dicho, la carencia de todo punto de vista independiente, propio del ala intelectual del partido, sugestionada a la vez por las fórmulas en boga del bernsteinismo (3), y los resultados inmediatos y las formas del "movimiento puramente obrero" (4). La sugestión ejercida por estas fórmulas tuvo como consecuencia la traición general de los marxistas legales, pasados al campo del liberalismo y la invención de la famosa teoría de la "táctica-proceso" que ha valido a nuestros oportunistas el remoquete de "seguido-

(1) El artículo que sigue *Dos tácticas*, aunque haya sido insertado en las *Obras completas* (segunda edición) de Lenin, t. VIII, págs 108-115, por razones de estilo o dando fe a recuerdos personales, no puede atribuírsele con toda seguridad, pues no está firmado, y por otra parte no se ha encontrado el original.

(2) Sobre las discusiones con los economistas, véase el volumen precedente de estas *Páginas escogidas*.

(3) Como la «libertad de crítica» (véanse los extractos de *¿Qué hacer?*).

(4) Expresiones de *Rabochaya Misl*, órgano de los economistas.

TWO TACTICS

From the very beginning of the mass working-class movement in Russia, i.e., approximately for the past ten years, profound differences have existed among Social-Democrats on questions of tactics. As we know, it was differences of this kind that gave rise, in the late nineties, to the trend of Economism, which led to the split into an opportunist (*Rabocheye Dyelo*) wing and into a revolutionary (old-*Iskra*) wing of the Party. Russian Social-Democratic opportunism, however, differed from that of Western Europe in certain peculiar features. It strikingly reflected the point of view, or rather the absence of any independent point of view, of the intellectualist wing of the Party, which was carried away both by the current catchwords of Bernsteinism and by the forms and immediate results of the pure-and-simple labour movement. This infatuation led to wholesale treachery on the part of the legal Marxists, who went over to liberalism, and to the creation by Social-Democrats of the famous "tactics-as-process" theory, which firmly attached to our opportunists the label of "tail-enders". They trailed helplessly behind events, plunged from one extreme to another, and in all cases reduced the scope of activity of the revolutionary proletariat and its faith in its own strength, all of which was usually done on the pretext of raising the independent activity of the proletariat. Strange, but true. No one talked so much about the independent activity of the workers, and no one did so much by his propaganda to narrow, curtail, and diminish that activity as did the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists.

"Talk less about 'raising the activity of the working masses'," the class-conscious, advanced workers said to their zealous but misguided advisers. "We are far more active than

you think, and we are quite able to support, by open street fighting, even demands that do not promise any 'tangible results' whatever. It is not for you to 'raise' our activity, because activity is precisely the thing you yourselves lack. Bow less in subservience to spontaneity, and think more about raising your own activity, gentlemen!" This is how the attitude of the revolutionary workers towards the opportunist intellectuals had to be characterised. (*What Is To Be Done?*, p. 55.*)

The two steps back which the new *Iskra* took towards *Rabocheye Dyelo* revived this attitude. Once again the columns of *Iskra* pour forth the preachings of tail-ism under cover of the same nauseating vows: Verily, O Lord, I do profess and believe in the independent activity of the proletariat. It was in the name of the independent activity of the proletariat that Axelrod, Martynov, Martov, and Lieber (the Bundist) defended at the Congress the right of professors and students to become members of the Party without joining any Party organisation. It was in the name of the independent activity of the proletariat that the "organisation-as-process" theory was invented, a theory that justified disorganisation and glorified the anarchism of the intellectuals. It was in the name of the independent activity of the proletariat that the no less famous "higher-type-of-demonstration" theory was invented, in the form of an *agreement* between a workers' delegation, which had been passed through the sieve of a three-stage system of elections, *and the Zemstvo men* for a peaceful demonstration that was to create no panic fear. It was in the name of the independent activity of the proletariat that the idea of the armed uprising was perverted and vulgarised, debased and confused.

In view of its vast practical importance, we should like to draw the reader's attention to this question. The development of the working-class movement played a cruel joke on the wise men of the new *Iskra*. They circulated a letter in Russia, which, in the name of "the process of the systematic development of the class-consciousness and independent activity of the proletariat", recommended, as a higher type of demonstration, "that the workers' petitions be posted to the

* See present edition, Vol. 5, p. 417.—*Ed.*

homes of the municipal councillors and a considerable number of copies scattered in the Zemstvo Assembly Hall"; they sent a second letter to Russia, conveying the most sensational discovery that at the present "historical moment the political stage is fully occupied [!] by the conflict between the organised bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy" and that "every [mark well!] revolutionary movement of the lower strata has only one [!] objective meaning, to support the slogans of that one of the two [!!] forces which is interested in breaking down the present regime" (the democratic intelligentsia was declared to be "a force"); hardly had the first letter been circulated and the second letter reached Russia, hardly had the class-conscious workers had time to read these marvellous missives and to have a good laugh at them, when the events of the real struggle of the proletariat promptly swept all this political rubbish of the new-*Iskra* publicists on to the waste heap. The proletariat showed that there is a third *force* (actually, of course, not third, but, in sequence, second and in fighting ability first), which is not merely interested in breaking down the autocratic regime, but is *ready to start on the actual job of breaking it down*. Since the Ninth of January, the working-class movement *has been developing* before our very eyes into the popular uprising.

Let us see how this transition to the uprising was evaluated by the Social-Democrats, who had discussed it in advance as a question of tactics, and how the workers themselves began to settle this question in practice.

Three-years ago the following was said on insurrection as a slogan that defines our immediate, practical tasks: "Picture to yourselves a popular uprising. Probably everyone will now agree that we must think of this uprising and prepare for it. But how? Surely the Central Committee cannot appoint agents to all localities for the purpose of preparing the uprising! Even if we had a Central Committee, it could achieve absolutely nothing by such appointments under present-day Russian conditions. But a network of agents that would form in the course of establishing and distributing the common newspaper would not have to 'sit about and wait' for the call to insurrection, but could carry on such regular activity as would guarantee the highest probability of success in the event of an insurrection. Such activ-

ity would strengthen our connections with the broadest masses of the workers and with all strata that are discontented with the autocracy, which is of such importance for an uprising. Precisely such activity would serve to cultivate the ability to estimate correctly the general political situation and, consequently, the ability to select the proper moment for the uprising. Precisely such activity would train *all* local organisations to respond simultaneously to the same political questions, incidents, and events that agitate the whole of Russia and to react to these 'incidents' in the most vigorous, uniform, and expedient manner possible; for the uprising is in essence the most vigorous, most uniform, and most expedient 'answer' of the entire people to the government. And lastly, it is precisely such activity that would train all revolutionary organisations throughout Russia to maintain the most continuous, and at the same time the most secret, contacts with one another, thus creating *real* Party unity; for without such contacts it will be impossible collectively to discuss the plan for the uprising and to take the necessary preparatory measures on the eve, measures that must be kept in the strictest secrecy.

"In a word, the 'plan for an all-Russian political newspaper', far from representing the fruits of the labour of armchair workers, infected with dogmatism and bookishness (as it seemed to those who gave but little thought to it), is the most practical plan *for immediate and all-round preparation of the uprising*, *with*, *at the same time*, *no loss of sight for a moment of the pressing day-to-day work*." (*What Is To Be Done?**)

The concluding words, which we have underlined, give a clear answer to the question how the revolutionary Social-Democrats envisaged the work of preparing the uprising. But clear as this answer is, the old tail-ist tactics could not fail to assert themselves on this point also. Quite recently Martynov published a pamphlet entitled *Two Dictatorships*, which has been strongly recommended by the new *Iskra* (No. 84). The author is stirred to the depths of his *Rabocheye Dyelo* soul with indignation at the fact that Lenin could bring himself to speak of "preparing, *timing*, and

* See present edition, Vol. 5, p. 516.—*Ed.*

carrying out the general armed uprising of the people". The stern Martynov smites the enemy with the statement: "On the basis of historical experience and a scientific analysis of the dynamics of social forces, international Social-Democracy has always recognised that only palace revolutions and pronunciamentos can be *timed* in advance and carried out successfully according to a previously prepared plan, for the very reason that they are not popular revolutions, i.e., revolutions in social relations, but only reshufflings among the ruling cliques. Social-Democracy has always and everywhere recognised that a people's revolution cannot be *timed* in advance, that it is not prepared artificially, but that it comes about of itself."

Perhaps, having read this tirade, the reader will say that obviously Martynov is "anything but" a serious opponent and that it would be absurd to take him seriously. We would quite agree with the reader. We would even say to such a reader that no greater evil on earth could befall us than to have to take all the theories and all the arguments of our new-*Iskra* people seriously. The only trouble is that this nonsense appears also in the editorials of *Iskra* (No. 62). Worse still, there are people in the Party, by no means few, who stuff their heads with this nonsense. And so we have to discuss non-serious matters, just as we have to discuss the "theory" of Rosa Luxemburg, who discovered the "organisation-as-process". We are obliged to explain to Martynov that uprising must not be confused with people's revolution. We have to keep explaining that profound allusions to a revolution in social relations when what is at issue is the practical question of the ways of overthrowing Russian autocracy are worthy only of a Kifa Mokiyevich.[58] This revolution began in Russia with the abolition of serfdom, and it is the backwardness of our political superstructure as compared with the accomplished revolution in social relations that makes the collapse of the superstructure inevitable; an immediate collapse *as the result of a single blow* is quite possible, since "the people's revolution" in Russia has already dealt tsarism a hundred blows, and whether the hundred and first or the hundred and tenth will finish it off is really a matter of conjecture. Only opportunist intellectuals, who try to impute their own philistine ways to the proletarians, can

flaunt their high school knowledge of a "revolution in social relations" at a time when practical ways are being discussed for delivering one of the blows in the second hundred. Only the opportunists of the new *Iskra* can raise hysterical clamours about a sinister "Jacobin" plan, the keynote of which, as we have seen, is all-round mass agitation by means of a political newspaper.

A people's revolution, true, cannot be timed. We cannot but praise Martynov and the writer of the leader in *Iskra*, No. 62, for knowing this truth ("what thought of preparing the uprising can there possibly be in our Party?" asked Martynov's loyal associate, or disciple, in that article, warring on the "utopians"). But if we have really prepared an uprising, and if a popular uprising is realisable by virtue of the revolutions in social relations *that have already taken place*, then it is quite possible to time the uprising. We shall attempt to clarify the point for the new-*Iskra* followers by a simple example. Can the working-class movement be timed? No, it cannot; for that movement is made up of thousands of separate acts arising from a revolution in social relations. Can a strike be timed? It can, despite the fact—just imagine, Comrade Martynov—*despite* the fact that every strike is the result of a revolution in social relations. When can a strike be timed? When the organisation or group calling it has influence among the *masses* of the workers involved and is able correctly to gauge the moment when discontent and resentment among them are mounting. Do you see the point now, Comrade Martynov and Comrade "leader-ist" of *Iskra*, No. 62? If you do, then please take the trouble to compare an uprising with a people's revolution. "A people's revolution cannot be timed in advance." An uprising can be, if those preparing it have influence among the masses and can correctly estimate the situation.

Fortunately, the initiative of the advanced workers happens to be far ahead of the tail-ist philosophy of the new *Iskra*. While the latter is squeezing itself dry for theories to prove that an uprising cannot be timed by those who have prepared for it and have organised the vanguard of the revolutionary class, events show that those who have not prepared may time, indeed, are sometimes compelled to time, an uprising.

Here is a leaflet sent to us by a St. Petersburg comrade. It was set up, printed, and distributed in more that 10,000 copies by the workers themselves, who had seized a legal printing-press in St. Petersburg on January 10.

"Workers of All Countries, Unite!

"*Citizens*! Yesterday you witnessed the brutality of the autocratic government. You saw blood flowing in the streets. You saw hundreds of fighters for the working-class cause lying dead; you saw death, you heard the groans of wounded women and defenceless children. The blood and brains of workers bespattered the roadways that workers' hands had laid. Who directed the troops, the rifles, and the bullets against the workers' breasts?

"The tsar, the grand dukes, the Ministers, the generals, and the scoundrels at Court.

"*They are the murderers! Death to them! To arms*, *comrades*, seize the arsenals, the munitions depots, and armourers' shops. Break down the prison walls, comrades, and release the fighters for freedom. Smash up the gendarme and police stations and all government institutions. Let us overthrow the tsarist government and establish our own. *Long live the revolution!* Long live the Constituent Assembly of People's Representatives!

"*Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party*."

The call to insurrection issued by this handful of advanced enterprising workers did not meet with success. Several unsuccessful calls to insurrection, or several unsuccessful "timings" of insurrection would not surprise or discourage us. We leave it to the new *Iskra* to hold forth in this connection on the necessity of a "revolution in social relations" and grandiloquently to condemn the "utopianism" of the workers who exclaimed, "Let us establish our own government!" Only hopeless pedants or muddle-heads would regard this watchword as the central point of such an appeal. What is important for us to note and emphasise is the remarkably bold and practical manner in which the problem now squarely confronting us was posed.

The call of the St. Petersburg workers was not answered and could not have been answered as quickly as they wished. This call will be repeated time and again, and the attempts at an uprising may result in more failures. But the very fact

that the workers themselves have raised this issue is of tremendous significance. The gain which the working-class movement has made in bringing home the practical urgency of this problem and in moving it closer to the forefront of any popular unrest is a gain that nothing can take away from the proletariat.

As much as three years ago the Social-Democrats had on general grounds advanced the slogan of preparing the uprising. The independent activity of the proletariat arrived at the same slogan as a result of the direct lessons taught by the civil war. There are two kinds of independent activity. There is the independent activity of a proletariat possessed of revolutionary initiative, and there is the independent activity of a proletariat that is undeveloped and is held in leading-strings; there is a consciously Social-Democratic independent activity, and there is a Zubatovist independent activity. And there are Social-Democrats who to this day contemplate with reverence the second kind of independent activity, who believe that they can evade a direct reply to the pressing questions of the day by repeating the word "class" over and over again. We need but take No. 84 of *Iskra*. "Why," asks its "leader-ist", bearing down on us with a triumphant air, "why was it not the narrow organisation of professional revolutionaries, but the Workers' Assembly that set this avalanche in motion [January 9]? *Because this Assembly was a really* [mark this!] *broad organisation based on the independent activity of the working-class masses*." If the author of this classical phrase were not an admirer of Martynov, he might have understood that the Assembly rendered a service to the movement of the revolutionary proletariat only when and to the extent that it passed from Zubatovist independent activity to Social-Democratic independent activity (after which it immediately ceased to exist as a legally functioning organisation).

Had the new-Iskrists, or the new-*Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists not been tail-enders, they would have realised that it was the Ninth of January that justified those who had said that "...in the long run the legalisation of the working-class movement will be to our advantage, and not to that of the Zubatovs" (*What Is To Be Done?**). It was the Ninth of January

* See present edition, Vol. 5, p. 455.—*Ed.*

that proved again and again the importance of the task formulated in that pamphlet: "...we must prepare reapers, both to cut down the tares of today [paralyse today's corrupting influence of the Zubatov movement] *and to reap the wheat of tomorrow*" (give a revolutionary lead to the movement that has advanced a step with the aid of legalisation). The Simple Simons of the new *Iskra*, however, use the bountiful wheat harvest as a pretext for minimising the importance of a strong organisation of revolutionary reapers. Like the Bundists, they fuss over the catchphrase "independent activity of the workers" as a child with a new toy.

It would be criminal, the new-*Iskra* leader-writer continues, "to attack the revolution in the rear". What this sentence means, God only knows. As to its bearing on the general opportunist complexion of *Iskra*, we shall probably deal with the point on another occasion. Here it will suffice to indicate that this sentence can have but one true political meaning, namely, that the author grovels in the dust before the rear of the revolution and disdainfully turns up his nose at the "narrow" and "Jacobin" van of the revolution.

The more the new *Iskra* displays its Martynovist zeal, the clearer becomes the contrast between the tactics of tailism and the tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy. We pointed out in the first issue of *Vperyod** that an uprising must connect itself with one of the spontaneous movements. Consequently, we do not in the least forget the importance of "guarding the rear", to employ a military term. In *Vperyod*, No. 4,** we referred to the correct tactics of the St. Petersburg Committee members, who from the outset directed all their efforts towards supporting and developing the revolutionary elements in the spontaneous movement, while at the same time maintaining an attitude of reserve and distrust towards the shady, Zubatov rear of that movement. We shall conclude now with a piece of advice, which no doubt we shall have to repeat more than once to the new-Iskrists: Do not minimise the tasks of the revolution's vanguard, do not forget our obligation to support this vanguard by our *organised* independent activity. Use fewer

* See p. 28 of this volume.—*Ed.*
** See p. 106 of this volume.—*Ed.*

platitudes about the development of the independent activity of the workers—the workers display no end of independent revolutionary activity which you do not notice!—but see to it rather that you do not demoralise undeveloped workers by your own tail-ism.

Vperyod, No. 6,
February 14 (1), 1905

Published according to
the text in *Vperyod*

FROM MARX
TO MAO

NOT FOR
COMMERCIAL
DISTRIBUTION

¿DEBEMOS ORGANIZAR LA REVOLUCION?

En otro artículo aparecido el 27 de enero de 1905 en el número 85 de la Iskra, *Mártov, deduciendo las lecciones del 9 de enero, escribía que a las múltiples víctimas de esta jornada revolucionaria convenía agregar cuatro ideas que habían sido muertas, o, al menos, mortalmente heridas: la idea del absolutismo "popular", la idea del socialismo policíaco, la "política de confianza", y, en fin, el "liberalismo moderado", que especulaba con el agotamiento del absolutismo en su lucha contra sus enemigos exteriores e interiores para obtener la entrega sin dolor de una parte del poder a los ziemstvos. Después, con una velocidad acrecida, pero en el mismo sentido que antes, con la misma táctica, el partido agrupará, cada vez más, a todos los elementos de la clase obrera que piensan políticamente, y cuando su voz de agitación colectiva sea oída en todas partes, cuando reúna en sus organizaciones a todos los elementos revolucionarios del bajo pueblo, "entonces tendremos la seguridad de disponer de la dirección política de la acción popular inminente e inevitable". Este es el papel que la socialdemocracia debe esforzarse por desempeñar, y no el de director técnico único de la revolución. Si todos los elementos de fermentación que la revolución hace surgir le toman una parte de esta dirección técnica, no por eso dejan de ser sus reivindicaciones las que contribuyen a arrastrar a los sectores atrasados del pueblo.*

Por consiguiente, "el objetivo de la socialdemocracia en el momento actual no es tanto "organizar" la revolución popular como "desencadenarla". La revolución existe ya en potencia en el pensamiento y en los sentimientos de la masa del pueblo. Hay que darle una salida en un movimiento declarado, hay que hacerla pasar a los actos, y esto es únicamente una cuestión de agitación y de organización, de dirección política de las masas".

Tal era la fórmula de la teoría del "desencadenamiento de la revolución" que prohibía al partido tomar la dirección oficial de los actos revolucionarios, y que Mártov mismo ha reconocido en su Historia de la Socialdemocracia rusa, que no era completamente sólida.

Esta fórmula se basaba, como Mártov lo explica, en la idea de que el proletariado no sería el único que obraría en los acontecimientos próximos, sino que le podrían agruparse bajo la bandera socialdemócrata grandes masas democráticas que le serían a su lado, precisamente, lo que negaba un defensor de los mencheviques, Parvus, en un artículo del número 85 de la Iskra. La masa campesina es amorfa, decía. En la democracia urbana no se nota ninguna corriente verdaderamente revolucionaria; por consiguiente, en la revolución, el papel del proletariado es con mucho, predominante. Si es así, el partido del proletariado es la única fuerza capaz de organizar el movimiento espontáneo, no sólo políticamente, sino también desde el punto de vista técnico y de preparar el asalto general que, gracias a la ausencia de concurrentes en la escena política, hará caer fatalmente en sus manos las riendas del poder.

En el artículo que sigue Lenin tiene, pues, la posibilidad de oponer Parvus a Mártov sobre la cuestión de la organización de la revolución. Pero los acontecimientos no permitían continuar en lo abstracto. Ajenos a las discusiones, el proletariado reclamaba armas. En numerosos sitios dacaba las tiendas de los armeros. La primera cosa que pedía a los partidos, tanto al socialista-revolucionario como al socialdemócrata, después del 9 de enero, eran bombas y fusiles. Pero en este momento la Iskra se declaraba incompetente, parecía temer de que los obreros tuviesen verdaderamente el deseo de atacar a la autocracia con las armas en la mano. Lenin había ya declarado en el número 4 de Vperiod el 18 de enero: "El armamento del pueblo es una de las tareas urgentes del momento revolucionario. Sólo el pueblo armado puede ser el verdadero reducto de la libertad... El armamento inmediato de los obreros y de las fuerzas revolucionarias para el aniquilamiento de las autoridades y de las instituciones gubernamentales he aquí la base práctica sobre la cual pueden y deben unirse todos los revolucionarios para asestar un golpe común".

El número 7 de Vperiod, *de donde está sacado el artículo siguiente, apareció el 8 de febrero de* 1905 (1).

* * *

Hace de esto bastante tiempo, mucho tiempo, hace más de un año. En el partido ruso, según el testimonio de Parvus, conocido socialdemócrata [illegible] gian "desacuerdos de principio". La lucha contra el centralismo extremado, contra la pretensión de "mandar" a los obreros desde Ginebra, contra la exageración de la idea de formar agitadores y jefes, se convertía en el principal objetivo político del partido del proletariado. Esta era la convicción profunda, sólida e inquebrantable del menchevique Parvus, expuesta por él en el número del 30 de noviembre de 1903 de su hoja semanal alemana *Aus der Weltpolitik* (*La política mundial*).

Se le demostró entonces al bueno de Parvus (véase la carta de Lenin a la redacción de la *Iskra* en diciembre de 1903) (3) que había sido víctima de los come-

(1) El artículo siguiente *¿Debemos organizar la revolución?* no puede ser atribuído con toda seguridad a Lenin, pues el original no se ha encontrado; sin embargo figura en las *Obras completas*, t. VII, págs 122-129 (segunda edición).

(2) Parvus había nacido en el sur de Rusia, pero obligado a emigrar muy joven militó en el partido socialdemócrata alemán. Economista y teórico de gran valor, combatió enérgicamente, en varios periódicos, el revisionismo de Bernstein. Colaboró en la *Iskra* en la época de su fundación, pero después pronunció[illegible]se, con Rosa Luxemburg, contra los principios de organización de Lenin.

(3) En esta carta en que explica «por qué ha salido de la redacción de la *Iskra*» Lenin escribe a propósito de las publicaciones de todas clases que la oposición hace circular en Rusia y en el extranjero contra las decisiones del II Congreso : «Se ve hasta qué punto están difundidas en el extranjero esas publicaciones por el hecho de que el bueno de Parvus ha partido en campaña contra nuestra idea de reunir todos los hilos en una misma mano y de «mandar» *(sic)* a los obreros desde Ginebra *(Aus der Weltpolitik*, V. Jahrg. núm. 48, 30-11-03). Un mes o dos todavía, y nuestro nuevo adversario de la autocracia leerá las actas de los congresos del partido y de la *Liga* y se convencerá de que es fácil hacer el ridículo tomando por moneda corriente no importa que *Parteiklatsch* (comadreo en el partido).

SHOULD WE ORGANISE THE REVOLUTION?

It happened a long, long time ago, more than a year ago. According to the testimony of the not unknown German Social-Democrat, Parvus, "fundamental differences" had arisen in the Russian Party. It had become the primary political task of the party of the proletariat to combat the extremes of centralism, the idea of "giving orders" to the workers from some obscure Geneva and the over-estimation of the idea of an organisation of agitators, of an organisation of leaders. Such was the deep, firm, and unshakable conviction of the Menshevik Parvus, expressed in his weekly German news-sheet *Aus der Weltpolitik* for November 30, 1903.

It was pointed out at the time to the estimable Parvus (see Lenin's letter to the editors of *Iskra*, December 1903*) that he was the victim of a piece of scandal-mongering, that what he took for fundamental differences were at bottom mere squabbles, and that the shift in the new *Iskra*'s ideas, which was becoming noticeable, was a shift towards opportunism. Parvus fell silent, but his "ideas" on over-estimating the importance of an organisation of leaders were taken up and worked to death by the new-Iskrists.

Fourteen months went by. The disruptive work of the Mensheviks within the Party and the opportunist nature of their propaganda became perfectly clear. January 9, 1905, fully revealed the vast reserve of revolutionary energy possessed by the proletariat, as well as the utter inadequacy of Social-Democratic organisation. Parvus came to his senses. He wrote an article in *Iskra*, No. 85, which, in fact, was a *volte-face* from the new ideas of the opportunist

* See present edition, Vol. 7, pp. 121-22.—*Ed.*

new *Iskra* to the ideas of the revolutionary old *Iskra*. "There was a hero," Parvus exclaims, referring to Gapon, "but no political leader, no programme of action, no organisation.... The lack of organisation produced tragic results.... The masses are disunited, everything is without plan, there is no coalescing centre, no guiding programme of action.... The movement has declined for lack of a coalescing and guiding organisation." And Parvus proposes the slogan which we suggested in issue No. 6 of *Vperyod*—"*Organise the Revolution!*"* The lessons of the revolution have convinced Parvus that "under present political conditions we cannot organise the hundreds of thousands" (the reference is to the masses ready for revolt). "But," he says, repeating with good reason an idea expressed long ago in *What Is To Be Done?*, "we can create an organisation that would serve as a combining ferment, and, at the moment of revolution, rally the hundreds of thousands to its side. We must organise workers' circles which shall have a clearly defined task, namely, to prepare the masses for the uprising, to rally them to our side at the time of the uprising, and to launch the uprising when the slogan is issued."

At last! we exclaimed with relief, when we came across these old truths buried amid the rubbish of the new *Iskra*. At last the revolutionary instinct of a functionary of the proletarian party has prevailed, if only temporarily, over *Rabocheye Dyelo* opportunism. At last we hear the voice of a Social-Democrat who does not cringe before the revolution's rearguard but fearlessly points to the need for supporting the van of the revolution.

The new-Iskrists, of course, could not agree with Parvus. "We do not share all the views expressed by Comrade Parvus," says the editors' note.

We should say not! Catch them "sharing" views which hit out at all the opportunist nonsense they have been spewing for the last eighteen months!

"Organise the Revolution!" But have we not our wise Comrade Martynov, who knows that a revolution is caused by a complete change in social relations, that a revolution cannot be timed? Martynov will point out to Parvus

* See pp. 148-57 of this volume.—*Ed.*

his mistake and prove that even if the latter had in mind the organisation of the vanguard of the revolution, it is nevertheless a "narrow" and noxious "Jacobin" idea. Besides, our wise Martynov has a Tryapichkin[61] on a string in the shape of Martov, who is capable of rendering his teacher more profound and who can well substitute the slogan "*Unleash* the Revolution!" for the slogan "Organise the Revolution!" (see No. 85; the author's italics).

Yes, dear reader, this is the slogan we are given in *Iskra*'s leading article. These days, apparently, it is enough to "unleash" one's tongue for a free chatter-process, or for the process of chatter, in order to be able to write leading articles. The opportunist invariably requires slogans that, on closer scrutiny, are found to be nothing but high-sounding phrases, nothing but decadent word-jugglery.

"Organise, and again organise!" Parvus urges, for all the world as if he had turned Bolshevik. He does not understand, poor fellow, that organisation is a *process* (*Iskra*, No. 85, as well as all the previous numbers of the new *Iskra*, particularly the magnificent *feuilletons* of the magnificent Rosa). He does not know, poor devil, that according to the whole spirit of dialectical materialism, tactics are as much a process as organisation is. Like a "conspirator" he runs about with his organisation-as-plan. Like a "utopian", he imagines that one can simply up and organise the thing offhand at some, God forbid, Second or Third Congress.

The "Jacobin" Pillars of Hercules this Parvus talks himself up to! "To launch the uprising when the slogan is issued"—imagine that! It is even worse than the idea of "timing" the uprising, which has been exploded by our redoubtable Martynov. Really, Parvus ought to take a lesson or two from Martynov. He should read *Iskra*, No. 62; the leading article will tell him of the harmful "*utopian*" ideas about preparing the insurrection, which were spread so prematurely in our Party in 1902 and 1904. He should read Axelrod's foreword to "A Worker's" pamphlet to learn what "a deep-seated, harmful canker [*sic*!], downright destructive to the Party", Social-Democracy is threatened with on the part of people who "pin all their hopes on spontaneous revolts of the most backward, least class-conscious, and positively uncivilised [!] elements of the masses".

Parvus admits that it is impossible at present to organise the hundreds of thousands, and he considers it our primary task "to create an organisation that would serve as a combining ferment". How can the new-Iskrists help squirming when such things appear in the columns of their paper? Obviously, an organisation that will serve as a combining ferment is simply an organisation of professional revolutionaries, at the mere mention of which our new-Iskrists go off into a swoon.

We are grateful indeed to *Iskra* for its leading article, which it has printed alongside Parvus's. How marked is the contrast between this empty, muddled phrase-mongering of the tail-ender and the clear, distinct, forthright, and bold revolutionary slogans of the old *Iskra*. Is it not sheer bombast to say that "the policy of confidence is quitting the stage *never again* to fool Russia or Europe"? As a matter of fact, any issue of a European bourgeois newspaper shows that this fooling is still being carried on with success. "Moderate Russian liberalism has been dealt its death-blow." It is childish political naïveté to believe liberalism dead when it is merely trying to be "politic" and to lie low. Liberalism is very much alive, it has taken on a new lease of life. Indeed, it is now on the threshold of power. The reason it is lying low is that it wants to make its bid for power at the right moment with the greatest certainty of success and the least risk. For this reason it is so assiduously making up to the working class. One must be hopelessly short-sighted to take this flirtation (a hundred times more dangerous for being practised at the moment) seriously and to declare boastfully that "the proletariat—the liberator of the country, the proletariat—the vanguard of the whole nation, has now had its *heroic role recognised* by the public opinion of the progressive elements of the liberal-democratic bourgeoisie." Gentlemen of the new *Iskra*, when will you understand that the liberal bourgeoisie acknowledges the proletariat as hero *for the very reason* that this proletariat, though dealing a blow at tsarism, is not yet strong enough, not yet Social-Democratic enough, to *win* for itself the kind of freedom *it* wants. When will you understand that what we must do is not to boast about the present bowing and scraping of the liberals, but to warn the proletariat

against it and show up what lies behind it. You do not see that? Then look at what the *industrialists*, *merchants*, *and stockbrokers are saying* about the necessity of a constitution. How plainly these declarations speak of the death of moderate liberalism! The liberal windbags prate about the heroism of the proletarians, while the industrialists weightily and imperiously demand a skimpy constitution—that is how matters stand, dear "leaders"!*

But nothing can compare with *Iskra*'s arguments on the question of arming. "The work of arming the proletariat and systematically building up the organisation which shall guarantee that the people's attack upon the government shall take place simultaneously everywhere" is declared to be a "technical" (?!) job. And we, of course, are above such trivialities as technique, we go to the root of things. "Important though they are (the 'technical' jobs), *it is not upon them that our efforts should be concentrated* in preparing the masses for revolt.... All the efforts of the underground organisations will count for nothing if they fail to arm the people with the one indispensable weapon—*a sense of the burning necessity to attack the autocracy and to arm for the purpose. It is on propaganda among the masses to arm themselves for the purpose of revolt* that we should concentrate our efforts." (The italics in the last two passages are the author's.)

This is indeed a profound way of stating the issue, nothing like the narrow-minded Parvus, who almost reached the point of "Jacobinism". The crux of the matter is not in the work of arming or in the systematic building up of the organisation, but in arming the people with a sense of the burning necessity to arm. What a painful feeling of

* The above lines had been written when we received from the liberal camp the following information, which is not without interest. The St. Petersburg special correspondent of the German bourgeois-democratic newspaper *Frankfurter Zeitung* (February 17, 1905) quotes a *liberal St. Petersburg journalist* on the political situation: "The liberals would be fools to let a moment like the present slip by. The liberals now hold all the trumps, for *they have succeeded in hitching the workers to their cart*, whereas the government has no one, since the bureaucracy does not give anyone a chance to get ahead." What sublime simplicity must be reigning in the new *Iskra* for them to be writing about the death of liberalism at such a moment!

shame for Social-Democracy comes upon one at the sight of these philistine platitudes, which seek to drag our movement back! To arm the people with a sense of the burning necessity to arm is the constant, common duty of the Social-Democrats always and everywhere, and it can be applied equally to Japan as it can to England, to Germany as it can to Italy. Wherever there are oppressed classes struggling against exploitation, the doctrine of the socialists, from the very start, and in the first place, arms them with a sense of the burning necessity to arm, and this "*necessity*" is present when the labour movement *begins*. Social-Democracy has only to make this burning necessity a conscious one, to bring home to those who are conscious of it the need for organisation and planned action, the need for considering the whole political situation. Dear Editor of *Iskra*! Please drop in at any meeting of German workers and see the hatred towards, let us say, the police, that burns in the faces there; what bitter sarcasms and clenched fists you will hear and see there! What is the force that holds in check this burning necessity to mete out summary justice to the bourgeoisie and its servitors who ill-use the people? It is the force of organisation and discipline, the force of consciousness, the consciousness that individual acts of assassination are absurd, that the hour for the serious revolutionary struggle of the people has not yet struck, that the political situation is not ripe for it. That is why, under such circumstances, no socialist will ever bid the people arm, but he will always make it his duty (otherwise he is no socialist, but a mere windbag) to arm them with a sense of the burning necessity to arm and attack the enemy. However, the conditions in Russia today differ from these everyday conditions of work; therefore, the revolutionary Social-Democrats, who until now have never issued a call to arms but have always equipped the workers with a sense of the burning necessity to arm—therefore, the revolutionary Social-Democrats, following the initiative of the revolutionary workers, have *now* issued the slogan, *To arms*! At such a time, when this slogan has at last been issued, *Iskra* delivers itself of the statement that the main thing is not arming, but the burning necessity to arm. What is this but sterile intellectualist logic-chopping and hopeless Tryapichkin-ism? Are not these people dragging

the Party back, away from the pressing tasks of the revolutionary vanguard to the contemplation of the proletariat's "posterior"? This unbelievable vulgarisation of our tasks is due not to the individual qualities of one or other Tryapichkin, but to their entire position, which has been so inimitably formulated in the catchwords organisation-as-process and tactics-as-process. Such a position in itself necessarily condemns a man to fear all definite slogans, to shy at all "plans", to back away from bold revolutionary initiative, to philosophise and chew the cud, to be in fear of running too far ahead—and this at a time when we Social-Democrats are obviously lagging behind the proletariat in revolutionary activity. Truly the dead are clutching at the living; the dead theories of *Rabocheye Dyelo* lie like a dead hand upon the new *Iskra* too.

Let us consider *Iskra*'s arguments regarding "the politically leading role of Social-Democracy as the vanguard of the class destined to emancipate the nation." "We can neither attain that role," we are told, "nor firmly establish our title to it even if we take over full control of the technical organisation and conduct of the uprising." Think of it! We cannot attain the role of vanguard even if we succeed in taking full control of the conduct of the uprising! And these people presume to speak of vanguard! They *fear* history will impose upon them the leading role in the democratic revolution, and they are *terrified* at the thought of having "to conduct the uprising". The thought lurks at the back of their minds—only they do not yet dare to voice it outright in the columns of *Iskra*—that the Social-Democratic organisation *must not* "conduct the uprising", that it must not strive to take full control over the revolutionary transition to the democratic republic. They scent in this, these incorrigible Girondists of socialism, monstrous Jacobinism.[62] They do not understand that the harder we strive to take full control of the conduct of the uprising, the greater will our share in the undertaking be, and that the greater this share is, the less will the influence of the anti-proletarian or non-proletarian democrats be. They are determined to be at the tail-end; they have even invented a philosophy of their own to prove that the tail-end is the right place for them. Martynov has actually begun to expound this

philosophy, and tomorrow, no doubt, he will dot the i's in the columns of *Iskra*.

Let us try to follow the argument step by step:

"The class-conscious proletariat, governed by the logic of the spontaneous process of historical development, will utilise for its own purposes all the elements of organisation, all the elements of ferment which the eve of the revolution creates...."

Fine! But to utilise *all* elements means to assume *full* leadership. *Iskra* defeats its own purpose and, realising this, hastens to add:

"... wholly undismayed by the fact that all these elements rob it of a share in the technical leadership of the revolution itself and thus involuntarily help to carry our demands to the most backward sections of the masses."

Can you make anything of this, dear reader? To utilise *all* elements, *undismayed* by the fact that they rob us of a share in the *leadership*?! But, hold on, gentlemen, if *we* really utilise all elements, if it is really *our* demands that are adopted by those we utilise, then they do not *rob* us of the leadership, but *accept* our leadership. If, on the other hand, *all* these elements really rob us of the leadership (and of course not only "technical" leadership, because to separate the "technical" side of a revolution from its political side is sheer nonsense), then it is not we who utilise them, but they us.

"We should be only too glad if, following the priest who popularised among the masses our demand for the separation of the Church from the State, if, following the monarchist workers' society which arranged the popular procession to the Winter Palace, the Russian revolution would find itself the richer by a general, who would be the first to lead the masses in the last fight against the tsar's troops, or by a government official who would be the first to proclaim the formal overthrow of the rule of the tsars."

Yes, we too should be glad of it, but we should not want a feeling of joy over pleasant *prospects* to overshadow our sense of logic. What is meant by the *Russian revolution* finding itself the richer by a priest or a general? What is meant is that the priest or the general will become an adher-

ent or leader of the revolution. These "tyros" may be fully or not quite fully conscious adherents of the revolution. In the latter event (which is the more probable with tyros) we must deplore, not welcome, their lack of consciousness and *do our utmost to cure and fill this lack*. As long as we leave this undone, as long as the masses follow a leader who is lacking in consciousness, we have to admit that it is not the Social-Democrats who utilise these elements, but vice versa. Yesterday's priest, general, or government official who becomes an adherent of the revolution, may be a prejudice-ridden bourgeois democrat, and insofar as the workers will follow *him* the bourgeois democrats will be "utllising" the workers. Is this clear to you, gentlemen of the new *Iskra*? If it is, then why do you *fear* the assumption of leadership by the fully conscious (*that is*, Social-Democratic) adherents of the revolution? Why do you fear lest a Social-Democratic officer (I purposely select an analogous example) and member of the Social-Democratic organisation assume, "completely take over", the functions and tasks of your hypothetical general at the initiative and on the instructions of that organisation?

To return to Parvus. He concludes his excellent article with the excellent advice to get rid of the disorganisers by "throwing them overboard". To get rid of the disorganisers is, as the items in our Party News column show,[63] the most impassioned and emphatic slogan of the majority of the Russian Social-Democrats. Precisely, Comrade Parvus, they must be "thrown overboard" in the most ruthless fashion, and the throwing must start with those heroes of the Social-Democratic press who have been sanctioning disruption by their organisation-as-process and organisation-as-tendency "theories". The thing is not merely to talk of it, but to *do* it. We must convene immediately a congress of all Party workers who wish to organise the Party. We must not confine ourselves to persuasion and to appeals, but must put a direct and inexorable ultimatum to all who hesitate, to all who waver, vacillate, and doubt: "Make your choice!" From the first issue of our newspaper we have sounded that ultimatum on behalf of the Editorial Board of *Vperyod*, on behalf of the mass of Russian Party workers who have been driven to intense exasperation by the

disorganisers. Make haste, then, and throw them overboard, comrades, and let us settle down to the work of organisation with a hearty good will. Better a hundred revolutionary Social-Democrats who have accepted organisation-as-plan than a thousand intellectuals of the Tryapichkin tribe who prattle about organisation-as-process.

Vperyod, No. 7,
February 21 (8), 1905

Published according to
the text in *Vperyod*

LA SOCIALDEMOCRACIA Y EL GOBIERNO REVOLUCIONARIO PROVISIONAL [1]

Para juzgar el criterio con el cual los bolcheviques de Rusia preparaban la insurrección y la manera como se resolvían entre ellos las cuestiones discutidas en la emigración, es interesante leer lo que escribía la "Oficina de los comités de la mayoría" en una hoja impresa en febrero y reproducida en el número 8 de Vperiod *del 23 de febrero:*

"Las revoluciones no son hechas por los partidos, sino solamente preparadas y organizadas por ellos, que dan a la lucha formas regulares y determinadas. Hay que suponer que la próxima racha de huelgas generales y de insurrecciones comenzará tan espontáneamente como la precedente. Lo que hace falta es percibir su comienzo y marchar inmediatamente en su dirección, pero al mismo tiempo no tomar por ese comienzo una simple escaramuza pasajera... Los pequeños círculos deben evitar toda iniciativa en esta materia. Para comprender si se trata de una escaramuza... o de una ola revolucionaria... es preciso dilucidar el grado de amplitud y de tensión de la emoción general... Lo que importa aquí son menos las ciudades que los artesanos, empleados, pequeños comerciantes, etc. Cuando la ola de la huelga general política se halla en su descenso... tratar de utilizar lo que queda de espíritu huelguista para las conquistas económicas...

El armamento de las masas es de una enorme importancia, pero presenta inmensas dificultades. Por buen resultado que den las colectas hechas a este efecto, sólo una parte insignificante de las necesidades será satisfecha... En este sentido, hay que esperar mucho más de la iniciativa de las masas que de nuestra acción inmediata. Al principio de la insurrección es preciso tener armas: para ello es necesario organizar el saqueo

(1) *Obras completas*, segunda edición rusa, tomo VII, págs. 183-196.

de las tiendas de los armeros y, allí donde sea pos
ble, de los arsenales. A este efecto, primero es preci
que haya una fuerza armada, poco numerosa si se qui
re, y además hombres que sepan distribuir inmedia
mente las armas, enseñar el manejo de las mismas, ha
cer subrayar la importancia del contacto con soldad
y oficiales, obreros armeros...

"La insurrección armada, de ordinario, no se desarrol
según un plan, porque el pueblo no es un ejérci
y los revolucionarios, por desgracia, no son capitane
Sin embargo, es posible un cierto grado de prepara
ción. La organización local debe, en todo caso, trazar
de antemano el plano estratégico de la ciudad y de su
alrededores, para saber donde conviene oponer resis
tencia y construir barricadas, donde esto sería inútil
donde será más cómodo cortar las comunicaciones,
donde se hallan los almacenes y depósitos de armas
la residencia del mando... La liberación de los presos
la confiscación de los fondos gubernamentales y la
rápida organización de tribunales extraordinarios para
juzgar a los espías son deseables desde el principio de
la insurrección."

Los autores tratan seguidamente de la acción en el
ejército, de los miramientos que conviene tener, en el
combate de calles, hacia los habitantes de todas clases
("preservar la propiedad privada de toda destrucción
inútil...")

El III Congreso, en mayo de 1905, declaró que "orga-
nizar al proletariado para la lucha directa contra la
autocracia por medio de la insurrección es uno de los
objetivos esenciales y urgentes del partido", y encarg
a sus organizaciones, además de la propaganda y de la
agitación, que preparasen enérgicamente el armamento
del proletariado, que estableciesen un plan de acción
armada, que formasen grupos a este efecto.

La conferencia reunida en los mismos días por los
mencheviques se pronunció en principio por la necesi-
dad de "preparar a las masas para la insurrección",
pero solamente mediante la agitación, influyendo en
coordinando los movimientos espontáneos que surgen
aquí y allá, reforzando en el pueblo la idea de que
debe estar presto a defenderse por las armas y de que
esta defensa puede transformarse en insurrección. Se
lamente después de todo esto los preparativos puramen
te militares pueden adquirir alguna importancia.

por eso mismo irremediablemente perdida, comprom
lida para siempre. Los bolcheviques en el poder se ver
obligados a fusilar a los obreros, como "el socialis
Millerand en Chalons y en la Martinica"; de soc
demócratas se convertirán en jacobinos burgueses
más tarde, después de la Constituyente, en mini
"socialistas de los gobiernos burgueses, traidores
proletariado" y Martinov cita en su apoyo lo que d
Engels, en su Historia de la guerra de los campesi
en Alemania a propósito del jefe campesino T
Münzer, convertido en dictador en Mühlhausen. Ad
más, agregan los mencheviques, esta participación
el poder con la burguesía es una repetición del mil
randismo, que ha sido condenado por los congresos
ternacionales, es vulgar jauresismo. En fin, esta idea
la socialdemocracia en el poder no puede en todo ca
hacer otra cosa que empujar a la burguesía hacia
absolutismo, y, por consiguiente, reforzar a la reacci

¿Qué actitud debe adoptar, pues, la socialdemoc
cia? Renunciar al poder y ocupar una posición que
permita "librarse de toda responsabilidad con re
pecto a la política limitada, y que le es extraña, de
pequeña burguesía, y denunciar teóricamente, y sob
todo prácticamente, su insuficiencia. En otros térm
nos, debemos, al mismo tiempo que preconizam
nuestro programa mínimo, tratar de conservar nues
posición de partido de extrema oposición" (Martino
Mártov estima que el único medio de prepararse pa
la perspectiva de una revolución socialista es "orga
zar al proletariado en partido de oposición al Est
de la democracia burguesa. Y el mejor medio para e
es desarrollar la revolución burguesa desde abajo, p
la presión del proletariado sobre la democracia en
poder". Esta táctica de oposición revolucionaria es
que Blanqui recomendaba en 1850 al proletariado
mán, en una época en que contaba con un resurgim
to de la revolución. Es la que recomendaba Engels
1894 al proletariado italiano" (Martinov).

La antítesis más completa de estos razonamientos
formulada en el campo mismo de los mencheviques
Parvus y Trotsky, que ya habían rechazado en 190
"plan de campaña municipal" como oportunista. Pa
vus lanzó una hoja titulada ¡Abajo el zar! ¡Viva el G
bierno obrero! y escribió para el folleto de Tro
Antes del 9 de enero un prefacio en el cual expone

táctica absolutamente original. Después del domingo sangriento, decía, la opinión pública ha abandonado la idea de la monarquía constitucional, la revolución empuja al pensamiento liberal hacia programas que no puede realizar con los elementos sociales en los cuales se apoya; fuera del proletariado no existen, pues, más que grupos idealistas que no se apoyan en ninguna fuerza social, o bien fuerzas sociales capaces sin duda de organización política, pero que no tienen ningún interés en la victoria completa de la revolución. En el momento de la caída de la autocracia todo el radicalismo político de los intelectuales se disipará como humo; eso será no el fin, sino el punto de partida de la época revolucionaria y el proletariado entonces tomará el poder para constituir un "gobierno provisional socialdemócrata".

En los dos artículos que siguen—las dos primeras partes del primero publicadas en el número 13 del Vperiod, el final del primero y el segundo en el número 14, — Lenin opone a las dos opiniones expuestas más arriba el punto de vista de los bolcheviques. Contra Martinov y Mártov, Lenin afirma la necesidad de materializar la victoria de la revolución, teniendo en cuenta la importancia social de los elementos pequeñoburgueses, en una dictadura revolucionaria del proletariado y de los campesinos; contra Parvus y Trotsky, Lenin mantiene el carácter burgués de la revolución presente y la distinción entre programa máximo y programa mínimo. Esos artículos no son más que un extracto de la polémica que se prosiguió durante varios meses sobre este tema.

⁂

I

Hace apenas cinco años la consigna *¡Abajo la autocracia!* parecía a no pocos socialdemócratas prematura, incomprensible para la mayoría de los obreros (1). Estos socialdemócratas fueron clasificados como era de justicia entre los oportunistas. No nos cansábamos

(1) Esos socialdemócratas eran los «economistas», que pensaban que los obreros no podían *todavía* comprender más que las reivindicaciones económicas.

SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT

Written at the end of March-beginning of April 1905

Published on April 5 and 12 (May 23 and 30), 1905 in *Vperyod*, Nos. 13 and 14

Published according to the manuscript

I

Only five years ago many representatives of Social-Democracy thought the slogan "Down with the Autocracy!" premature and unintelligible to the mass of the workers. These representatives were rightly classed as opportunists. It was explained to them again and again and finally made clear that they were lagging behind the movement, that they did not understand the tasks of the Party as vanguard of the class, as its leader and organiser, as the representative of the movement as a whole and of its fundamental and principal aims. These aims might be overshadowed for a time by the day-to-day routine, but they should never lose their significance as the guiding star of the fighting proletariat.

Now the time has come when the flames of revolution have spread throughout the land, and when even the most sceptical have come to believe in the inevitable overthrow of the autocracy in the near future. But Social-Democracy, as if by some irony of history, has to deal once more with precisely the same reactionary and opportunist attempts to drag the movement back, to play down its tasks, and to obscure its slogans. Polemics with the proponents of such attempts become the task of the day, and (contrary to the opinion of the very many who dislike intra-Party polemics) acquire tremendous *practical* importance. For the nearer we get to realising our immediate political tasks, the greater is the need to have an absolutely clear understanding of those tasks and the more harmful is all ambiguity, all reticence and mental inconclusiveness on this question.

And yet mental inconclusiveness is by no means a rare thing among the Social-Democrats of the new *Iskra* or (what is practically the same) the *Rabocheye Dyelo* camp. Down

with the Autocracy!—everyone agrees with this, not only all Social-Democrats, but all democrats, even all liberals, if one is to believe their current declarations. But what does it mean? How is this overthrow of the present government to take place? Who is to convene the Constituent Assembly, which even the *Osvobozhdeniye* people (see issue No. 67 of *Osvobozhdeniye*) are now prepared to advance as their slogan, including the demand for universal, direct, and equal suffrage? Precisely what should constitute the real guarantee that the elections to such an assembly will be free and will express the interests of the whole people?

He who fails to give a clear and definite answer to these questions does not grasp the meaning of the slogan "Down with the Autocracy". And these questions inevitably bring us to the question of the provisional revolutionary government; it is not difficult to understand that really free, popular elections to a Constituent Assembly, fully guaranteeing truly universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot, are not only improbable, but actually impossible under the autocracy. And if we are in earnest in putting forward a practical demand for the immediate overthrow of the autocratic government, we must be clear in our minds as to *precisely what other government* we want to replace the one that is to be overthrown. In other words, what do we think should be the attitude of the Social-Democrats towards a provisional revolutionary government?

On this question the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy, viz., the new-Iskrists, are dragging the Party back just as strenuously as the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists did five years ago on the question of political struggle in general. Their reactionary views on this point are fully elaborated in Martynov's pamphlet *Two Dictatorships*, which *Iskra*, No. 84, approved and recommended in a special review, and to which we have repeatedly called our readers' attention.

At the outset of his pamphlet Martynov tries to frighten us with the following grim prospect: If a strong, revolutionary Social-Democratic organisation could "time and carry out the general armed uprising of the people" against the autocracy, as Lenin dreamed, "is it not obvious that the general will of the people would on the morrow after the

revolution designate precisely this party as the provisional government? Is it not obvious that the people would entrust the immediate fate of the revolution precisely to this party, and to no other?"

This is incredible, but true. The future historian of Russian Social-Democracy will have to record with surprise that at the very outset of the Russian revolution the Girondists of Social-Democracy *tried to frighten* the revolutionary proletariat with such a prospect! Martynov's pamphlet (as well as a host of articles and passages in the new *Iskra*) is nothing but an attempt to daub the "horrors" of such a prospect. The ideological leader of the new-Iskrists is haunted by fear of "a seizure of power", by the bogy of "Jacobinism", of Bakuninism, of Tkachovism,[87] and of all the other dreadful isms with which old wives on the fringe of the revolution are so eager to scare political infants. Naturally, this is done not without "quoting" Marx and Engels. Poor Marx and poor Engels, what abuses their works have suffered through quotations! You remember how the maxim "Every class struggle is a political struggle"[88] was invoked to *justify* the narrowness and backwardness of *our* political tasks and methods of political agitation and struggle? Now it is Engels who is made to give false evidence in favour of tail-ism. In *The Peasant War in Germany*, he wrote: "The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party is to be compelled to take over a government in an epoch when the movement is not yet ripe for the domination of the class which he represents, and for the realisation of the measures which that domination requires." One has only to read carefully this opening of the lengthy passage which Martynov quotes to see plainly how our tail-ender distorts the author's meaning. Engels speaks of *a government that is required for the domination of a class*. Is this not obvious? Applied to the proletariat, it consequently means a government *that is required for the domination of the proletariat*, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat for the effectuation of the socialist revolution. Martynov fails to understand this, and confounds the provisional revolutionary government in the period of the overthrow of the autocracy with the requisite domination of the proletariat in the period of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; he confounds the democratic dictatorship of the

proletariat and the peasantry with the socialist dictatorship of the working class. Yet if we continue reading the quoted passage, Engels' idea becomes still clearer. The leader of the extreme party, he says, will have to "advance the interests of an alien class, and to feed his own class with *phrases and promises, and with the assurances that the interests of that alien class are its own interests*. Whoever finds himself in this *false position* is irrevocably lost."[89]

The underlined passages clearly show that Engels expressly warns against the false position that results from a leader's failure to understand the real interests of "his own" class and the real class content of the revolution. To make this clearer to the subtle mind of our Martynov we shall essay a simple illustration. When the adherents of the Narodnaya Volya, in the belief that they represented the interests of "Labour", assured themselves and others that 90 per cent of the peasants in the future Russian Constituent Assembly would be socialists, they put themselves in a false position which was bound to spell their irrevocable political doom, since these "promises and assurances" were at variance with objective reality. Actually they would have advanced the interests of the bourgeois democrats, "the interests of an alien class". Are you not beginning to perceive a ray of light, most worthy Martynov? When the Socialists-Revolutionaries describe the agrarian reforms that must inevitably come about in Russia as "socialisation", as "the transfer of the land to the people", as the beginning of "equality in land tenure", they place themselves in a false position which is bound to lead to their irrevocable political doom, because, in practice, the very reforms for which they strive will bring about the domination of *an alien class*, of the peasant bourgeoisie, so that the more rapidly the revolution develops, the more rapidly will their phrases, promises, and assurances be refuted by reality. Do you still fail to see the point, most worthy Martynov? Do you still fail to comprehend that the *essence* of Engels' thought is that it is fatal *not to understand* the real historical tasks of the revolution and that Engels' words are applicable, therefore, to the Narodnaya Volya adherents and the "Socialists-Revolutionaries"?

II

Engels points to the danger of failure on the part of the leaders of the proletariat to understand the *non-proletarian* character of the revolution, but our sage Martynov infers from this the danger that the leaders of the proletariat, who, by their programme, their tactics (i.e., their entire propaganda and agitation), and their organisation, have separated themselves from the revolutionary democrats, will play a leading part in establishing the democratic republic. Engels sees the danger in the leader's confounding of the pseudo-socialist with the really democratic character of the revolution, while our sage Martynov infers from this the danger that the proletariat, together with the peasantry, may consciously assume the dictatorship in the establishment of the democratic republic, the last form of bourgeois domination and the best form for the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Engels sees the danger in the false, deceptive position of saying one thing and doing another, of promising the domination of one class and actually ensuring that of another. Engels sees the irrevocable political doom consequent upon such a false position, while our sage Martynov deduces the danger that the bourgeois adherents of democracy will not permit the proletariat and the peasantry to secure a really democratic republic. Our sage Martynov cannot for the life of him understand that *such* a doom, the doom of the leader of the proletariat, the doom of thousands of proletarians in the struggle for a truly democratic republic, would well be a physical doom, but not, however, a political doom; on the contrary, it would be a momentous political victory of the proletariat, a momentous achievement of its hegemony in the struggle for liberty. Engels speaks of the political doom of one who unconsciously strays from the path of his own class to that of an alien class, while our sage Martynov, reverently (quoting Engels, speaks of the doom of one who goes further and further along the sure road of his own class.

The difference between the point of view of revolutionary Social-Democracy and that of tail-ism is glaringly obvious. Martynov and the new *Iskra* shrink from the task which the proletariat, together with the peasantry, is called upon

to shoulder—the task of the most radical democratic revolution; they shrink from the Social-Democratic leadership and of this revolution and thus surrender, albeit unwittingly, the interests of the proletariat into the hands of the bourgeois democrats. From Marx's correct idea that we must prepare, not a government party, but an opposition party *of the future*, Martynov draws the conclusion that we must form a tail-ist opposition to the *present* revolution. This is what his political wisdom adds up to. His line of reasoning, which we strongly advise the reader to ponder, is as follows:

"The proletariat cannot win political power in the state, either wholly or in part, until it has made the socialist revolution. This is the indisputable proposition which separates us from opportunist Jaurèsism..." (Martynov, *op. cit.*, p. 58)—and which, we would add, conclusively proves that the worthy Martynov is incapable of grasping what the whole thing is about. To confound the participation of the proletariat in a government that is resisting the socialist revolution with its participation in the democratic revolution is to miss the point hopelessly. It is like confounding Millerand's participation in the Cabinet of the murderer Galliffet with Varlin's[90] participation in the Commune, which defended and safeguarded the republic.

But listen further, and see what a tangle our author gets himself into: "But that being the case, it is evident that the coming revolution cannot realise any political forms *against the will of the whole* bourgeoisie, for the latter will be the master tomorrow..." (Martynov's italics). In the first place, why are only political forms mentioned here, when the previous sentence referred to the power of the proletariat in general, even to the extent of the socialist revolution? Why does not the author speak of realising economic forms? Because, without noticing it, he has already leaped from the socialist to the democratic revolution. Secondly, that being the case, the author is absolutely wrong in speaking *tout court* (bluntly) of "the will of the whole bourgeoisie", because the very thing that distinguishes the epoch of democratic revolution is the diversity of wills of the various strata of the bourgeoisie which is just emancipating itself from absolutism. To speak of the democratic revolution and confine oneself to a bald

contrast of "proletariat" and "bourgeoisie" is sheer nonsense, for *that* revolution marks the period in the development of society in which the mass of society virtually stands between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and constitutes an immense petty-bourgeois, peasant stratum. For the very reason that the democratic revolution has not yet been consummated, this immense stratum has far more interests in common with the proletariat in the matter of realising political forms than has the "bourgeoisie" in the real and strict sense of the word. Failure to understand this simple thing is one of the main sources of Martynov's muddle.

Further: "That being the case, the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, by simply frightening the majority of the bourgeois elements, can have but one result—the restoration of absolutism in its original form ... and, of course, the proletariat will not halt before this possible result; at the worst, if things tend decidedly towards a revival and strengthening of the decaying autocratic regime by means of a pseudo-constitutional concession, it will not hold back from frightening the bourgeoisie. In entering the struggle, however, the proletariat obviously does not have this 'worst' in view."

Can you make anything of this, dear reader? The proletariat will not hold back from frightening the bourgeoisie, which course will lead to the restoration of absolutism, if there should be a threat of a pseudo-constitutional concession! This is as much as to say: I am threatened with an Egyptian plague in the form of a one-day conversation with Martynov alone; therefore, if the worst comes to the worst, I shall fall back on the method of intimidation, which can lead only to a two-day conversation with Martynov and Martov. This is the sheerest gibberish, sir!

The idea that haunted Martynov when he wrote the nonsense here quoted was the following: if in the period of the democratic revolution the proletariat uses the threat of the socialist revolution to frighten the bourgeoisie, this can lead only to reaction, which will also weaken the democratic gains already won. That and nothing more. There can be no question, of course, either of restoring absolutism in its original form or of the proletariat's readiness, if the worst comes to

the worst, to resort to the worst kind of stupidity. The whole thing takes us back to the difference between the democratic and the socialist revolution, overlooked by Martynov, to the existence of that immense peasant and petty-bourgeois population which is capable of supporting the democratic revolution, but is at present incapable of supporting the socialist revolution.

Let us listen further to our sage Martynov: "Evidently, the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie on the eve of the bourgeois revolution must differ in some respects from the same struggle at its concluding stage, on the eve of the socialist revolution...." Yes, this is evident; and if Martynov had paused to think what this difference actually is, he would hardly have written the above-given drivel, or, indeed, his whole pamphlet.

"The struggle to influence the course and outcome of the bourgeois revolution can find expression only in the exertion of revolutionary pressure by the proletariat on the will of the liberal and radical bourgeoisie, and in the compulsion on the part of the more democratic 'lower strata' of society to bring the 'upper strata' into agreement to carry through the bourgeois revolution to its logical conclusion. The struggle will find expression in the fact that the proletariat will at every opportunity confront the bourgeoisie with the dilemma—either backward, into the strangling grip of absolutism, or forward, with the people."

This tirade is the central point of Martynov's pamphlet. We have here its sum and substance, all its fundamental "ideas". And what do all these clever ideas turn out to be? Who are these "lower strata" of society, the "people" of whom our sage has at last bethought himself? They are precisely that multitudinous petty-bourgeois stratum of town and village which is quite capable of functioning in a revolutionary-democratic capacity. And what is this *pressure* that the proletariat and the peasantry can exert on the upper social strata, what is meant by the proletariat advancing together with the people in despite of the upper social strata? It is *that same revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry* against which our tail-ender is declaiming! Only he is afraid to think to the end, to call a spade a spade. And so he utters words whose meaning he

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

does not understand. In ludicrous, florid language,* he timidly repeats slogans, the true significance of which escapes him. None but a tail-ender could deliver himself of such a curio in the most "interesting" part of his summary as: revolutionary pressure of the proletariat and the "people" on the upper strata of society, but without a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Only a Martynov could show himself so adept! Martynov wants the proletariat to threaten the upper strata of society that it will go forward with the people, while at the same time firmly deciding with its new-*Iskra* leaders *not to go forward* along the democratic path, because that is the path of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship. Martynov wants the proletariat to exert pressure on the will of the upper strata by displaying its own lack of will. Martynov wants the proletariat to bring the upper strata "into agreement" to carry the bourgeois revolution through to its logical, democratic-republican conclusion, but to do so by expressing its own fear of *assuming*, jointly with the people, the task of carrying the revolution through, its fear of taking power and forming the democratic dictatorship. Martynov wants the proletariat to be the vanguard in the democratic revolution and *therefore* our sage Martynov *frightens* the proletariat with the perspective of participation in the provisional revolutionary government in the event of the success of the insurrection!

Reactionary tail-ism could go no further. We should all prostrate ourselves before Martynov, as we would before a saint, for having developed the tail-ist tendencies of the new *Iskra* to their logical conclusion and for having given them emphatic and systematic expression with regard to the most pressing and basic political questions.**

---

* We have already pointed out the absurdity of the idea that, if the worst comes to the worst, the proletariat might push the bourgeoisie back.

** This article was already set up when we received issue No. 93 of *Iskra*, with which we shall deal on another occasion.[91]

III

What is Martynov's muddle-headedness due to? To the fact that he confounds democratic revolution with socialist revolution; that he overlooks the role of the intermediate stratum of the people lying between the "bourgeoisie" and the "proletariat" (the petty-bourgeois masses of the urban and rural poor, the "semi-proletarians", the semi-proprietors); and that he fails to understand the true meaning of our minimum programme. Martynov has heard that it is wrong for a socialist to participate in a bourgeois Cabinet (when the proletariat is struggling for the socialist revolution), and he hastens to "understand" this as meaning that we should not participate with the revolutionary bourgeois democrats in the democratic revolution and in the dictatorship that is essential for the full accomplishment of such a revolution. Martynov read our minimum programme, but he missed the fact that the strict distinction it draws between transformations that can be carried out in a bourgeois society and socialist transformations is not merely booklore but is of the most vital, practical significance; he missed the fact that in a revolutionary period this programme must be immediately tested and applied in practice. It did not occur to him that rejecting the idea of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship in the period of the autocracy's downfall is tantamount to renouncing the fulfilment of our minimum programme. Indeed, let us but consider all the economic and political transformations formulated in that programme—the demand for the republic, for arming the people, for the separation of the Church from the State, for full democratic liberties, and for decisive economic reforms. Is it not clear that these transformations cannot possibly be brought about in a bourgeois society without the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the lower classes? Is it not clear that it is not the proletariat alone, as distinct from the "bourgeoisie", that is referred to here, but the "lower classes", which are the active motive force of every democratic revolution? These classes are the proletariat *plus* the scores of millions of urban and rural poor whose conditions of existence are petty-bourgeois. Without a doubt, very many representatives of these masses belong to the bourgeoisie. But

there is still less doubt that the complete establishment of democracy is in the interests of these masses, and that the more enlightened these masses are, the more inevitable will be their struggle for the complete establishment of democracy. Of course, a Social-Democrat will never forget the dual political and economic nature of the petty-bourgeois urban and rural masses; he will never forget the need for a separate and independent class organisation of the proletariat, which struggles for socialism. But neither will he forget that these masses have "a future as well as a past, judgement as well as prejudices",[92] a judgement that urges them onward towards the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship; he will not forget that enlightenment is not obtained from books alone, and not so much from books even as from the very progress of the revolution, which opens the eyes of the people and gives them a political schooling. Under such circumstances, a theory that rejects the idea of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship cannot be otherwise designated than as a philosophical justification of political backwardness.

The revolutionary Social-Democrat will reject such a theory with contempt. He will not confine himself on the eve of the revolution to pointing out what will happen "if the worst comes to the worst". Rather, he will also show the possibility of a better outcome. He will dream—he is obliged to dream if he is not a hopeless philistine—that, after the vast experience of Europe, after the unparalleled upsurge of energy among the working class in Russia, we shall succeed in lighting a revolutionary beacon that will illumine more brightly than ever before the path of the unenlightened and downtrodden masses; that we shall succeed, standing as we do on the shoulders of a number of revolutionary generations of Europe, in realising all the democratic transformations, the whole of our minimum programme, with a thoroughness never equalled before. We shall succeed in ensuring that the Russian revolution is not a movement of a few months, but a movement of many years; that it leads, not merely to a few paltry concessions from the powers that be, but to the complete overthrow of those powers. And if we succeed in achieving this, then ... the revolutionary conflagration will spread to Europe; the European worker, languishing under bourgeois reaction, will rise in his turn

and show us "how it is done"; then the revolutionary upsurge in Europe will have a repercussive effect upon Russia and will convert an epoch of a few revolutionary years into an era of several revolutionary decades; then—but we shall have ample time to say what we shall do "then", not from the cursed remoteness of Geneva, but at meetings of thousands of workers in the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg, at the free village meetings of the Russian "muzhiks".

IV

Such dreams, of course, are strange and alien to the philistines of the new *Iskra* and to that "master of men's minds", our good dogmatist Martynov. They fear the full achievement of our minimum programme through the revolutionary dictatorship of the simple, common people. They are afraid for their own political consciousness, afraid of losing the book knowledge they have learned by rote (but not assimilated), afraid that they may not be able to distinguish the correct and bold steps of the democratic transformations from the adventurous leaps of non-class, Narodnik socialism or of anarchism. Their philistine souls warn them with good reason that in a rapid onward march it is more difficult to distinguish the right path and quickly to solve the new and complex problems than in the routine of small-scale, everyday work; therefore, they mutter instinctively: Away, away! Let this cup of revolutionary-democratic dictatorship pass from me! It's as much as our life is worth! Gentlemen, better "go slow, with timid zigzags".

Small wonder that Parvus, who had so generously supported the new-Iskrists as long as it was a question chiefly of co-opting the most venerable and the most deserving, finally began to feel very uncomfortable in this stagnant company. Small wonder, too, that he began more and more to feel the *taedium vitae*, life weariness, in this company. In the end he rebelled. He did not stop at defending the slogan "Organise the revolution", which had frightened the new *Iskra* to death; he did not limit himself to writing manifestos, which *Iskra* published as separate leaflets, carefully avoiding all mention of the name of the Social-Democratic

Labour Party in view of the "Jacobin" horrors.* No, having freed himself from the nightmare of the profound organisation-as-process theory advanced by Axelrod (or was it Luxemburg?), Parvus managed at last to go forward, instead of moving backward like a crab. He refused to perform the Sisyphean labour[93] of endlessly correcting Martynov's and Martov's follies. He openly advocated (unfortunately, together with the windbag Trotsky in a foreword to the latter's bombastic pamphlet *Before the Ninth of January*) the idea of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, the idea that it was the duty of Social-Democrats to take part in the provisional revolutionary government after the overthrow of the autocracy. Parvus is profoundly right in saying that the Social-Democrats must not fear to take bold strides forward, to deal joint "blows" at the enemy, shoulder to shoulder with the revolutionary bourgeois democrats, on the definite understanding, however (very appropriately brought to mind), that the organisations are not to be merged, that we march separately but strike together, that we do not conceal the diversity of interests, that we watch our ally as we would our enemy, etc.

But for all our warm sympathy for these slogans of a revolutionary Social-Democrat** who has turned away from the tail-enders, we could not help feeling jarred by certain false notes that Parvus struck. We mention these slight errors, not out of captiousness, but because from him to whom much

*I do not know whether our readers have noticed the following characteristic fact: among all the trash issued by the new *Iskra* in the form of leaflets, there were some good writings bearing Parvus' signature. The editors of the new *Iskra* turned their back on these leaflets, which they printed without the name of our Party or of the publishers.

**On the issue raised in Trotsky's pamphlet with Parvus' foreword published at the Party's printing house, *Iskra* maintains a judicious silence. Obviously, it would not be to its advantage to unravel the mess: while Martynov is pulling one way and Parvus the other way, we shall hold our tongue until Plekhanov has pulled Martov out by the ears! And that, with us, is called "ideological leadership of the party"! Incidentally, a curious piece of "formalism". Our Solomons on the Council have decided that the Party's cachet is permissible only on pamphlets commissioned by Party organisations. It would be interesting to learn from these Solomons what organisation commissioned the pamphlets of Nadezhdin, Trotsky and others. Or were those people right who declared the above-mentioned "decision" to be a mean trick in the parochial spirit against Lenin's publishing house?

is given, much is demanded. It would be most dangerous at present for Parvus to compromise his correct position by his own imprudence. Among the least imprudent is the following sentence in his preface to Trotsky's pamphlet: "If we wish to keep the revolutionary proletariat apart from the other political currents, we must learn to stand ideologically at the head of the revolutionary movement [this is correct], to be more revolutionary than anyone else." This is incorrect. That is to say, it is incorrect, if the statement is taken in the general sense in which it is expressed by Parvus; it is incorrect from the point of view of the reader to whom this preface is something standing by itself, apart from Martynov and the new-Iskrists, whom Parvus does not mention. If we examine this statement dialectically, i.e., relatively, concretely, in all its aspects, and not after the manner of those literary jockeys, who, even many years after, snatch separate sentences from some single work and distort their meaning, it will become clear that Parvus directs the assertion expressly against tail-ism, *to which extent* he is right (compare particularly his subsequent words: "If we *lag behind* revolutionary development", etc.). But the reader cannot have in mind only tail-enders, since there are others besides tail-enders among the dangerous friends of the revolution in the camp of the revolutionaries—there are the "Socialists-Revolutionaries"; there are people like the Nadezhdins, who are swept along by the tide of events and are helpless in the face of revolutionary phrases; or those who are guided by instinct rather than by a revolutionary outlook (like Gapon). These Parvus forgot; he forgot them because his presentation, the development of his thoughts, was not free, but was hampered by the pleasant memory of the very Martynovism against which he seeks to warn the reader. Parvus' exposition is not sufficiently concrete because he does not consider the totality of the various revolutionary currents in Russia, which are inevitable in the epoch of democratic revolution and which naturally reflect the still unstratified classes of society in such an epoch. At such a time, revolutionary-democratic programmes are quite naturally veiled in vague, even reactionary, socialist ideas concealed behind revolutionary phrases (to wit, the Socialists-Revolutionaries and Nadezhdin, who, it seems, changed only his

label when he went over from the "revolutionary socialists" to the new *Iskra*). Under such circumstances we, the Social-Democrats, never can and never will advance the slogan "Be more revolutionary than anyone else". We shall not even try to keep up with the revolutionariness of a democrat who is detached from his class basis, who has a weakness for fine phrases and flaunts catchwords and cheap slogans (especially in agrarian matters). On the contrary, we will always be critical of such revolutionariness; we will expose the real meaning of words, the real content of idealised great events; and we will teach the need for a sober evaluation of the classes and shadings within the classes, even in the hottest situations of the revolution.

Equally incorrect, for the same reason, are Parvus' statements that "the revolutionary provisional government in Russia will be a government of working-class democracy", that "if the Social-Democrats are at the head of the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat, this government will be a Social-Democratic government", that the Social-Democratic provisional government "will be an integral government with a Social-Democratic majority". This is impossible, unless we speak of fortuitous, transient episodes, and not of a revolutionary dictatorship that will be at all durable and capable of leaving its mark in history. This is impossible, because only a revolutionary dictatorship supported by the vast majority of the people can be at all durable (not absolutely, of course, but relatively). The Russian proletariat, however, is at present a minority of the population in Russia. It can become the great, overwhelming majority only if it combines with the mass of semi-proletarians, semi-proprietors, i.e., with the mass of the petty-bourgeois urban and rural poor. Such a composition of the social basis of the possible and desirable revolutionary-democratic dictatorship will, of course, affect the composition of the revolutionary government and inevitably lead to the participation, or even predominance, within it of the most heterogeneous representatives of revolutionary democracy. It would be extremely harmful to entertain any illusions on this score. If that windbag Trotsky now writes (unfortunately, side by side with Parvus) that "a Father Gapon could appear only once", that "there is no room for a second

Gapon", he does so simply because he is a windbag. If there were no room in Russia for a second Gapon, there would be no room for a truly "great", consummated democratic revolution. To become great, to evoke 1789-93, not 1848-50, and to surpass those years, it must rouse the vast masses to active life, to heroic efforts, to "fundamental historic creativeness"; it must raise them out of frightful ignorance, unparalleled oppression, incredible backwardness, and abysmal dullness. The revolution is already raising them and will raise them completely; the government itself is facilitating the process by its desperate resistance. But, of course, there can be no question of a mature political consciousness, of a Social-Democratic consciousness of these masses or their numerous "native" popular leaders or even "muzhik" leaders. They cannot become Social-Democrats at once without first passing a number of revolutionary tests, not only because of their ignorance (revolution, we repeat, enlightens with marvellous speed), but because their class position is not proletarian, because the objective logic of historical development confronts them at the present time with the tasks, not of a socialist, but of a democratic revolution.

In this revolution, the revolutionary proletariat will participate with the utmost energy, sweeping aside the miserable tail-ism of some and the revolutionary phrases of others. It will bring class definiteness and consciousness into the dizzying whirlwind of events, and march on intrepidly and unswervingly, not fearing, but fervently desiring, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, fighting for the republic and for complete republican liberties, fighting for substantial economic reforms, in order to create for itself a truly large arena, an arena worthy of the twentieth century, in which to carry on the struggle for socialism.

LA DICTADURA REVOLUCIONARIA DEMOCRATICA DEL PROLETARIADO Y DE LOS CAMPESINOS [1]

La cuestión de la participación de la socialdemocracia en el gobierno revolucionario provisional ha sido puesta al orden del día más bien por los razonamientos teóricos de una tendencia socialdemócrata, que por el curso de los acontecimientos (2). En dos folletos (núms. 13 y 14), hemos analizado los razonamientos de Martinov, que ha sido el primero en plantear esta cuestión. A lo que parece, el interés que suscita es tan grande y la confusión engendrada por estos razonamientos (véase sobre todo el núm. 93 de la *Iskra*) (3) es tan enorme, que es preciso detenerse una vez más en ellos. Es probable que dentro de poco este problema tome un carácter no sólo teórico; pero, piensen lo que quieran los socialdemócratas sobre esta probabilidad, la claridad de sus fines inmediatos es una necesidad par

(1) *Obras completas*, segunda edición rusa, t. VII, págs. 196-20

(2) En su discurso en el III Congreso «sobre la participación en el gobierno revolucionario provisional», Lenin repite : «De momento puede parecer extraño que una cuestión semejante se presente. Diría que los negocios de la socialdemocracia son brillantes y que la probabilidad de su participación en el gobierno revolucionario provisional es muy grande. No hay nada de esto. Examinar esta cuestión desde el punto de vista de una realización política próxima sería quijotismo. Pero la cuestión nos ha sido impuesta menos por la situación real que por una polémica de literatos. Es preciso tener siempre en cuenta que ha sido planteada por primera vez por Martinov antes del 9 de enero».

(3) El número 93 de la *Iskra*, aparecido el 17 de marzo de 190 contiene en efecto sobre este tema, una *Carta política* de Trotsky, artículo de Mártov : «El partido obrero y la *toma del poder* como nuestro "objetivo inmediato» y las «Perspectivas revolucionarias» de Martinov.

⁂

El artículo que precede no puso fin a la polémica; por el contrario, Plejánov, entre otros, atacaba el pasaje en que Lenin (la Iskra, núm. 96 del 5 de abril) escribe que es una concepción escolar de la historia, digna de un virtuoso de la pedantería representarse una sucesión regular pacífica en el poder primeramente de la burguesía liberal, después de la pequeña burguesía democrática, y, finalmente, del proletariado socialista. ¡Es a Marx a quien Lenin trata de escolar y de virtuoso de la pedantería! Marx, en efecto, en 1850, en una circular de la Liga de los Comunistas declaraba que los acontecimientos de 1848-1849 habían colocado en primer término a la gran burguesía liberal y que ahora avecindábase una nueva revolución en la cual la pequeña burguesía democrática tendrá una influencia preponderante. Los socialdemócratas deben vencer a la gran burguesía de concierto con esta pequeña burguesía, pero marchar separadamente; durante la ascensión de esta última al poder, deben dictarle condiciones susceptibles de facilitar el reemplazamiento futuro del reino de la democracia burguesa por el del proletariado; en fin, después de la revolución, deben organizarse en un potente partido de oposición que, por su crítica y su agitación, empuje hacia adelante al gobierno pequeño-burgués. La consigna de los obreros debe ser en este caso la revolución permanente.

Tal es el contenido de este texto, resumido por Plejánov, y que desempeñó un papel tan importante en la polémica de aquella época. Lenin respondió en el III Congreso: La calificación de "pedantes" no está aplicada a Marx, sino a Martinov o a Mártov; el esquema dado por Marx (autocracia—monarquía burguesa—república democrática pequeño-burguesa) es justo en su conjunto, "pero si fijamos de antemano, según el esquema, los límites de los cuales no nos será permitido salir, seremos unos pedantes". Los consejos que da Marx convenían en una época en que la insurrección popular acababa de ser vencida, en tanto que nosotros estamos en vísperas de una insurrección victoriosa. Marx no tenía, pues, por qué hablar de la participación

del proletariado en un gobierno revolucionario prov
sional, y Plejánov engaña a su lector cuando dice que
"Marx no admitía siquiera la idea de que los represe
tantes políticos del proletariado puedan, de concierto
con los de la pequeña burguesía, trabajar en la creación
de un nuevo orden social". No es verdad que Marx re
suelva la cuestión negativamente; sencillamente no la
plantea. Plejánov discute en abstracto, a fuerza de
citaciones; Vperiod, por el contrario, razona "en su
terreno concreto, tiene en cuenta las fuerzas sociales
reales que participan en Rusia en la lucha por la revo
lución democrática".

La "conferencia" reunida por los mencheviques en
Ginebra, a mediados de abril, decidió que "la socialde
democracia debía, durante todo el curso de la revolu
ción, esforzarse por conservar la posición que le per
mitiría empujar mejor la revolución hacia adelante,
sin atarle las manos en su lucha contra la política in
consecuente e interesada de los partidos burgueses y
la preservaría de diluirse en la democracia burguesa.
Así, no debe proponerse tomar o compartir el poder
en el gobierno provisional, sino continuar siendo un
partido de extrema oposición revolucionaria". En
un solo caso la socialdemocracia debía tratar de adue
ñarse del poder y de conservarlo el mayor tiempo
posible: si la revolución se extendiese a Occidente, a
los países más o menos maduros para el socialismo,
pues entonces habría medio de ensanchar los límites
de la revolución rusa y de entrar en la vía de las
reformas sociales.

El III Congreso, el 19 abril de 1905, adoptó sobre la
cuestión del gobierno revolucionario provisional una
resolución que reproducía las ideas expuestas por Le
nin, con algunas precisiones aportadas por la discu
sión: en un momento dado de la revolución aparece
necesariamente un gobierno revolucionario del cual
el proletariado exigirá la realización del programa
mínimo de la socialdemocracia; en ciertas circunstan
cias, imposibles de precisar de antemano, "es admi
sible la participación en el gobierno revolucionario
provisional de delegados de nuestro partido, para
sostener una lucha implacable contra todas las tenta
tivas contrarrevolucionarias y defender los intereses
propios de la clase obrera"; la condición de esta par
ticipación es en todo caso el control de los delegados

por el partido; sea o no posible esta participación en el poder, "es preciso preconizar lo más ampliamente posible en el proletariado la idea de la necesidad de una presión constante sobre el gobierno provisional por parte del proletariado armado y guiado por la socialdemocracia, a fin de salvaguardar, de fortalecer y de extender las conquistas de la revolución".

THE REVOLUTIONARY-DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY [94]

The question of the participation of Social-Democracy in the provisional revolutionary government has been highlighted less by the course of events than by the theoretical reasonings of Social-Democrats of a certain trend. We dealt in two articles (issues Nos. 13 and 14) with the arguments of Martynov, who was the first to bring up this question. It appears, however, that the interest in the question is so keen and the misconceptions to which the afore-mentioned arguments have given rise (see in particular *Iskra*, No. 93) are so great that it is necessary to go into this matter once more. However Social-Democrats may assess the probability of our having to give more than a theoretical answer to this question in the near future, the Party at any rate must be clear as to its immediate aims. Unless there is clarity in this matter there can no longer be any consistent propaganda and agitation free from vacillations and mental reservations.

Let us try to reconstruct the essence of the controversial question. If what we want is not only concessions from the autocracy but its actual overthrow, we must work to replace the tsarist government by a provisional revolutionary government, which would, on the one hand, convene a Constituent Assembly on the basis of really universal, direct, and equal suffrage by secret ballot, and, on the other, be in a position to ensure real and complete freedom during the elections. Thus, the question arises whether it is right for the Social-Democratic Labour Party to participate in such a provisional revolutionary government. This question was first raised by spokesmen of the opportunist wing of

our Party, specifically by Martynov, prior to the Ninth of January, when he, and with him *Iskra*, answered it in the negative. Martynov sought to carry the conceptions of the revolutionary Social-Democrats to an absurdity; he *frightened* them by saying that in the event of a successful outcome to our work of organising the revolution, with our Party's assumption of leadership of the popular armed uprising, we would *have to* participate in the provisional revolutionary government. This participation would mean inadmissible "seizure of power", it would be "crass Jaurèsism", which no class-conscious Social-Democratic Party could tolerate.

Let us dwell on the contentions of those who hold to such a point of view. By participating in the provisional government, we are told, Social-Democracy would have the power in its hands; but as the party of the proletariat, Social-Democracy cannot hold the power without attempting to put our maximum programme into effect, i.e., without attempting to bring about the socialist revolution. In such an undertaking it would, at the present time, inevitably come to grief, discredit itself, and play into the hands of the reactionaries. Hence, participation by Social-Democrats in a provisional revolutionary government is inadmissible.

This argument is based on a misconception; it confounds the democratic revolution with the socialist revolution, the struggle for the republic (including our entire minimum programme) with the struggle for socialism. If Social-Democracy sought to make the socialist revolution its immediate aim, it would assuredly discredit itself. It is precisely such vague and hazy ideas of our "Socialists-Revolutionaries" that Social-Democracy has always combated. For this reason Social-Democracy has constantly stressed the bourgeois nature of the impending revolution in Russia and insisted on a clear line of demarcation between the democratic minimum programme and the socialist maximum programme. Some Social-Democrats, who are inclined to yield to spontaneity, might forget all this in time of revolution, but not the Party as a whole. The adherents of this erroneous view make an idol of spontaneity in their belief that the march of events will compel the Social-Democratic Party in such a position to set about achieving the socialist revolution, despite itself. Were this so, our programme would be incorrect, it would

not be in keeping with the "march of events", which is exactly what the spontaneity worshippers fear; they fear for the correctness of our programme. But this fear (a psychological explanation of which we attempted to give in our articles) is entirely baseless. Our programme is correct. And the march of events will assuredly confirm this more and more fully as time goes on. It is the march of events that will "impose" upon us the imperative necessity of waging a furious struggle for the republic and, in practice, guide our forces, the forces of the politically active proletariat, in this direction. It is the march of events that will, in the democratic revolution, inevitably impose upon us such a host of allies from among the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, whose real needs will demand the implementation of our minimum programme, that any concern over too rapid a transition to the maximum programme is simply absurd.

On the other hand, however, these very allies from among the petty-bourgeois democrats create in the minds of Social-Democrats of a certain trend new misgivings, namely, fear of "crass Jaurèsism". Participation in a government with the bourgeois democrats has been banned by a resolution of the Amsterdam Congress[95]; it is Jaurèsism, i.e., unconscious betrayal of the interests of the proletariat, the reduction of the proletariat to a hanger-on of the bourgeoisie, its corruption with the illusion of power, which in reality is completely unattainable in bourgeois society.

That reasoning is no less fallacious. It shows that those who resort to it have memorised good resolutions without understanding their meaning; they have learned a few anti-Jaurèsist catchwords by rote, but have not duly weighed them and thus misapply them; they have learned the letter but not the spirit of the recent lessons of international revolutionary Social-Democracy. To judge Jaurèsism from the point of view of dialectical materialism one must draw a clear line between subjective motives and objective historical conditions. Subjectively, Jaurès wanted to save the republic by entering into an alliance with the bourgeois democrats. The objective conditions of this "experiment" were that the republic in France had become an established fact and was in no grave danger; that the working class had every opportunity of developing an independent class

political organisation but did not take full advantage of this opportunity, partly because it was influenced by the parliamentary humbug of its leaders; that in actual practice, history was already objectively posing before the working class the tasks of the socialist revolution, *from which* the Millerands were *luring* the proletariat with promises of paltry social reforms.

Now to take Russia. Subjectively, revolutionary Social-Democrats like the *Vperyod*-ists or Parvus want to secure the republic by entering into an alliance with the revolutionary bourgeois democrats. The objective conditions differ from those in France as night differs from day. Objectively, the historical course of events has now posed before the Russian proletariat precisely the task of carrying through the democratic bourgeois revolution (the whole content of which, for brevity's sake, we sum up in the word Republic); this task confronts the people as a whole, viz., the entire mass of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry; without such a revolution the more or less extensive development of an independent class organisation for the socialist revolution is unthinkable.

Try to visualise concretely this complete difference in the objective conditions and then tell us: what is one to think of people who, carried away by the similitude of certain words, by the resemblance between certain letters, and by the sameness of subjective motives, forget this difference?

Because in France Jaurès paid homage to bourgeois social reform on the mistaken subjective plea of defending the republic, we Russian Social-Democrats are to abandon all serious struggle to win the republic! This exactly is what the profound wisdom of the new-Iskrists amounts to.

Indeed, is it not clear that as far as the proletariat is concerned the struggle for the republic is inconceivable without an alliance with the petty-bourgeois masses? Is it not clear that without the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry there is not a shadow of hope for the success of this struggle? One of the chief flaws in the argument under discussion is its deadness, its stereotyped character, its failure to make allowance for the revolutionary situation. Struggling for the republic while at the same time renouncing the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship is as though

Oyama had decided to fight Kuropatkin at Mukden, but disavowed beforehand any intention of taking the city. If we, the revolutionary people, viz., the proletariat and the peasantry, want to "fight together" against the autocracy, we must fight against it together to the last, finish it off together, and stand together in repelling the inevitable attempts to restore it! (It should be said again, to avoid possible misunderstanding, that by the republic we understand not only and not so much a form of government as the sum-total of democratic changes envisaged in our minimum programme.) One must have a schoolboy's conception of history to imagine the thing without "leaps", to see it as something in the shape of a straight line moving slowly and steadily upwards; first it will be the turn of the liberal big bourgeoisie—minor concessions from the autocracy; then of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie—the democratic republic; and finally of the proletariat—the socialist revolution. That picture, by and large, is correct, correct *à la longue*, as the French say—spread over a century or so (in France, for instance, from 1789 to 1905); but one must be a virtuoso of philistinism to take this as a pattern for one's plan of action in a revolutionary epoch. If the Russian autocracy, even at this stage, fails to find a way out by buying itself off with a meagre constitution, if it is not only shaken but actually *overthrown*, then, obviously, a tremendous exertion of revolutionary energy on the part of all progressive classes will be called for to defend this gain. This "defence", however, is nothing else than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry! The more we gain now and the more vigorously we defend the gains, the less will the inevitable future reaction be able to reappropriate afterwards, the shorter will the intervals of reaction be, and the easier will the task be for the proletarian fighters who will come after us.

But here come those who, yardstick in hand, *à la* Ilovaisky,* would measure off in advance, before the struggle has begun, a modest little bit of our future conquests—people who, before the downfall of the autocracy, even before the events of the Ninth of January, took it into their heads to intimidate the working class of Russia with the bogy of

* D. I. Ilovaisky (1832-1920)—a Russian historian, apologist of monarchism.—*Ed.*

a terrible revolutionary-democratic dictatorship! And these knights of the yardstick lay claim to the name of revolutionary Social-Democrats....

Participation in the provisional government with the bourgeois revolutionary democrats, they weep, means sanctioning the bourgeois order; it means sanctioning the perpetuation of prisons and the police, of unemployment and poverty, of private property and prostitution. This is an argument worthy either of anarchists or of Narodniks. Social-Democrats do not hold back from struggle for political freedom on the grounds that it is bourgeois political freedom. Social-Democrats regard this "sanctioning" of the bourgeois order from the historical point of view. When Feuerbach was asked whether he sanctioned the materialism of Büchner, Vogt, and Moleschott, he said: Backwards I fully agree with the materialists; but not forwards. That is precisely how Social-Democrats sanction the bourgeois system. They have never been afraid of saying, and never will be, that they sanction the republican-democratic bourgeois order in preference to an autocratic serf-owning bourgeois order. But they "sanction" the bourgeois republic only because it is the last form of class rule, because it offers a most convenient arena for the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie; they sanction it, not for its prisons and police, its private property and prostitution, but for the scope and freedom it allows to combat these charming institutions.

Far be it from us to contend that our participation in the revolutionary provisional government entails no dangers for Social-Democracy. There is not, nor can there be, any form of struggle, any political situation that does not involve dangers. If there is no revolutionary class instinct, if there is no integral world outlook on a scientific level, if (with due apologies to our friends of the new *Iskra*) there are no brains in the head, then it is dangerous even to take part in strikes—it may lead to Economism; to engage in parliamentary struggle—it may end in parliamentary cretinism[96]; to support the Zemstvo liberal democrats—it may lead to a "plan for a Zemstvo campaign". It would then be dangerous even to read the extremely useful writings of Jaurès and Aulard on the French Revolution—it may lead to Martynov's pamphlet on two dictatorships.

It goes without saying that if the Social-Democrats were to forget, even for a moment, the class distinctiveness of the proletariat vis-à-vis the petty bourgeoisie, if they were to form an ill-timed and unprofitable alliance with one or another untrustworthy petty-bourgeois party of the intelligentsia, if the Social-Democrats were to lose sight, even for a moment, of their own independent aims and the need (in all political situations and exigencies, in all political crises and upheavals) for attaching paramount importance to developing the class-consciousness of the proletariat and its independent political organisation, then participation in the provisional revolutionary government would be extremely dangerous. But under such circumstances, any political step, we repeat, would be equally dangerous. The groundlessness of these possible apprehensions as applied to the present formulation of the immediate tasks of the revolutionary Social-Democrats is borne out by a few simple statements of fact. We shall not speak about ourselves or quote the numerous declarations, warnings, and counsels on this question given in *Vperyod*; we shall, instead, cite Parvus. He subscribes to the opinion that the Social-Democrats should participate in the provisional revolutionary government, and he is emphatic on the conditions, which we must never forget, namely, to strike together, but to march separately, not to merge organisations, to watch our ally as we would our enemy, etc. We shall not dwell in detail on this aspect of the question, having dealt with it in our previous article.

No, the real political danger to Social-Democracy today does not lie where the new-Iskrists are looking for it. It is not the thought of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry that should frighten us, but rather the spirit of tail-ism and torpidity which has such a demoralising effect on the party of the proletariat and finds expression in all kinds of organisation-as-process, arming-as-process theories, and what not. To take, for instance, *Iskra*'s latest attempt to set up a distinction between the provisional revolutionary government and the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Is this not an example of lifeless scholasticism? People who invent such distinctions are capable of stringing together fine words but are absolutely incapable of thinking.

Actually, these concepts stand to each other roughly in the relation of legal form to class content. To speak of the "provisional revolutionary government" is to stress the constitutional aspect of the case, the fact that the government originates, not from the law, but from the revolution, that it is a temporary government committed to the future Constituent Assembly. But whatever the form, whatever the origin, whatever the conditions, one thing at any rate is clear—that the provisional revolutionary government must have the support of definite classes. One has only to remember this simple truth to realise that the provisional revolutionary government can be nothing else but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Therefore, *Iskra*'s distinction only drags the Party back to fruitless disputes, away from the task of making a concrete analysis of the class interests in the Russian revolution.

Or, to take another *Iskra* argument. The slogan "Long Live the Revolutionary Provisional Government!" draws from that paper the didactic remark: "The combination of the words 'long live' and 'government' sullies the lips." What is this, if not sheer bombast? They talk about overthrowing the autocracy and yet fear to sully themselves by acclaiming the revolutionary government! Surprisingly, they are not afraid of sullying themselves by acclaiming a republic, for a republic necessarily implies a government, and—no Social-Democrat ever doubted it—a bourgeois government at that. In what way, then, does acclaiming the provisional revolutionary government differ from acclaiming the democratic republic? Must Social-Democracy, the political leader of the most revolutionary class, take after an anaemic and hysterical old maid who finically insists on a figleaf? Is it right to acclaim what the bourgeois-democratic government stands for, but wrong directly to acclaim the provisional revolutionary-democratic government?

Picture it: the uprising of the workers in St. Petersburg has been victorious; the autocracy is overthrown; the provisional revolutionary government has been proclaimed; the armed workers jubilate, with outcries of "Long Live the Provisional Revolutionary Government!" The new-Iskrists stand on the side lines, their innocent eyes raised heavenward, solemnly uttering as they beat their chaste breasts:

"We thank Thee, O Lord, that we are not like these wretches and have not sullied our lips with such word combinations...."

No, comrades, a thousand times no! Have no fear of sullying yourselves by most energetic halting-at-nothing participation in a republican revolution together with the revolutionary bourgeois democrats. Do not exaggerate the dangers of such participation; our organised proletariat is quite capable of coping with them. More will be accomplished in months of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry than in decades of the peaceful, stupefying atmosphere of political stagnation. If, after the Ninth of January, the Russian working class, under conditions of political slavery, was able to mobilise over a million proletarians for staunch, disciplined, collective action, then, given the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, we will mobilise scores of millions of the urban and rural poor, and we will make the Russian political revolution the prelude to the socialist revolution in Europe.

Vperyod, No. 14,
April 12 (March 30), 1905

Published according to
the text in *Vperyod*

DOS TACTICAS DE LA SOCIALDEMOCRACIA EN LA REVOLUCION DEMOCRATICA

El 27 de abril de 1905, se había terminado en Londres el III Congreso del partido socialdemócrata de Rusia, convocado previo acuerdo entre el Comité Central y la Oficina de los comités de la mayoría, pero a cual asistían solamente los bolcheviques. Los delegados mencheviques, en consonancia con las indicaciones del Consejo del partido, presidido por Plejánov, se habían trasladado a Ginebra, con objeto de reunirse en una "Primera Conferencia Panrusa de los militantes del partido".

Teniendo en cuenta que en Londres estaba representada la mayoría de los comités de Rusia (20 de los 34 comités existentes), el Congreso debía ser considerado, según los estatutos adoptados en el II Congreso, como el único intérprete auténtico de la voluntad del partido. Con respecto a la "fracción destacada del partido", es decir, a los mencheviques, el congreso decidió que todos los miembros del partido debían combatir sus desviaciones (la teoría de la organización proceso, el relajamiento de la disciplina, la aplicación excesivamente amplia del principio electivo, la disminución del papel organizador del partido en la insurrección, la negativa a toda participación en un gobierno provisional democrático), pero serían tolerados en las organizaciones del partido "a la condición absoluta de reconocer los congresos del partido y sus estatutos y de someterse enteramente a la disciplina". Al mismo tiempo, el congreso, considerando que la redacción de la Iskra no se había presentado y que su conducta "no daba en el porvenir la garantía de una decisión acertada sobre las cuestiones de táctica", declaró que dicho periódico "dejaba de ser el órgano central del partido" y encargó al nuevo Comité central de "fundar un nuevo órgano central... que será titulado El Proletario".

Como el Vperiod, órgano de la fracción bolchevista, no era ya necesario, puesto que esta fracción se confundía con el partido, dejó de aparecer, y el primer número de El Proletario, dirigido asimismo por Lenin, apareció el 14 de mayo de 1905.

El 15 de mayo el número de la Iskra, publicaba en suplemento las resoluciones de la conferencia menchevista. Ambas asambleas, el congreso y la conferencia, habían examinado casi los mismos problemas: la insurrección, el gobierno provisional, el movimiento campesino, las relaciones con los liberales burgueses, la escisión del partido. Era, pues, fácil poner en paralelo las soluciones preconizadas de una parte y de otra. Es lo que Lenin hizo en un folleto escrito "antes de los acontecimientos de Odesa", es decir, antes de la sublevación del Potemkin y del tiroteo del 15 de julio de 1905. Este folleto se titulaba Dos tácticas de la socialdemocracia en la revolución democrática.

Lenin, después de analizar la resolución del congreso sobre el gobierno revolucionario provisional, critica punto por punto la resolución menchevista correspondiente, con sus expresiones dudosas como "la victoria decisiva de la revolución sobre el zarismo" en lugar de la dictadura democrática del proletariado y de los campesinos, la "liquidación definitiva de todo el régimen monárquico", en lugar de "la república democrática", "empujar la revolución hacia adelante" en lugar de "gobierno revolucionario provisional"; demuestra como es la táctica de los mencheviques y no la de los bolcheviques la que hace el juego de la democracia burguesa, como lo prueba la simpatía marcada de la Osvobojdénie por la nueva Iskra. El folleto terminaba con estas palabras: "Lo que hacen falta son consignos que eleven a la burguesía revolucionaria y republicana al nivel del proletariado, y no que rebajen a éste al nivel de la burguesía monárquica. Para esto, es preciso participar con toda nuestra energía en la insurrección, y no buscar buenas razones para sustraerse al deber urgente de la misma". Pero hacia esta época Lenin recibía el número 104 de la Iskra (aparecido el 1 de julio) que contenía las resoluciones de un "congreso de los militantes del partido de Guria" celebrado del 10 al 12 de mayo en esta provincia del Cáucaso, en la cual el partido socialdemócrata gozaba de una gran

influencia entre los campesinos y había manifestado la mayor actividad durante las revueltas de marzo.

Habiendo encontrado en dicha resolución, en una forma más acentuada que nunca, la vieja idea de los mencheviques de no herir la susceptibilidad de los liberales burgueses por miedo a que se separen de la revolución o a que se vuelvan contra ella, Lenin agrega a su obra el capítulo siguiente (1).

⁂

.....

12.—¿Será menor el alcance de la revolución democrática si la burguesía le vuelve la espalda?

Estaban ya escritas las líneas precedentes cuando hemos recibido las resoluciones de la conferencia caucasiana de los *neo-iskristas* publicadas en la *Iskra*. Pour *la bonne bouche* (2) (para postre) no podíamos imaginar nada mejor.

La redacción de la *Iskra* observa juiciosamente:

"En la cuestión fundamental de la táctica, la conferencia caucasiana ha adoptado una decisión análoga (¡es verdad!) a la tomada por la conferencia rusa (es decir, la de la nueva *Iskra*)... La cuestión de la actitud de la socialdemocracia con respecto al gobierno revolucionario provisional ha sido resuelta por los camaradas caucasianos en el sentido de una desaprobación completa del nuevo método preconizado por el grupo del *Vperiod* y por los delegados al pseudo-congreso (3) que pertenecen a dicho grupo". "Hay que reconocer que la conferencia ha dado una fórmula verdaderamente afortunada de la táctica del partido proletario en la revolución burguesa".

Lo que es verdad es verdad. Nadie hubiera podido formular de un modo más "afortunado" el error cap

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edic. rusa, t. VI, págs. 365-372.
(2) En francés en el original.
(3) Los mencheviki del extranjero, así como un cierto número de comités de Rusia, se negaban a considerar el III Congreso como regular

Conference declares that "Social-Democracy will continue to oppose, as *hypocritical friends of the people*, all those political parties which, though they display a liberal and democratic banner, refuse to render genuine support to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat". The Russian Liberation Union not only does not withhold this support, but offers it most insistently. Is that a guarantee that the leaders of this union are not "hypocritical friends of the people", even though they are "liberationists".

You see: by inventing "conditions" in advance, and presenting "demands" that are ludicrous by reason of their redoubtable impotence, the new-Iskrists immediately put themselves in a ridiculous position. Their conditions and demands immediately prove inadequate when it comes to an appraisal of living realities. Their chase after formulas is hopeless, for no formula can embrace all the various manifestations of hypocrisy, inconsistency, and narrow-mindedness displayed by the bourgeois democrats. It is not a question of "litmus-paper", forms, or written and printed demands, nor is it a question of drawing, in advance, a line of distinction between hypocritical and sincere "friends of the people"; it is a question of real unity in the struggle, of the Social-Democrats unabatingly criticising every "uncertain" step taken by bourgeois democracy. What is needed for "genuine consolidation of all the social forces interested in democratic change" is not the "points" over which the Conference laboured so assiduously and so vainly, but the ability to put forward genuinely revolutionary slogans. For this slogans are needed that will raise the revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie to the level of the proletariat, and not lower the aims of the proletariat to the level of the monarchist bourgeoisie. What is needed for this is the most energetic participation in the insurrection, not sophistical evasion of the urgent task of an insurrection.

12. WILL THE SWEEP OF THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION BE DIMINISHED IF THE BOURGEOISIE RECOILS FROM IT?

The foregoing lines were already written when a copy came to hand of the resolutions adopted by the Caucasian Conference of the new-Iskrists, and published by *Iskra*. Even if

we tried we could not invent anything better *pour la bonne bouche* (as a titbit).

The editors of *Iskra* remark with full justice: "On the fundamental question of tactics the Caucasian Conference also arrived at a decision *analogous*" (in truth!) "to that adopted by the All-Russia Conference" (i.e., of the new-*Iskra* group). "The question of Social-Democracy's attitude towards a provisional revolutionary government has been settled by the Caucasian Comrades in the spirit of most outspoken opposition to the new method advocated by the *Vperyod* group and the delegates of the so-called Congress who joined it." "It must be admitted that the formulation of the proletarian party's tactics in a bourgeois revolution, as given by the Conference, is *most apt*."

What is true is true. No one could have given a more "apt" formulation of the fundamental error of the new-*Iskra* group. We shall quote this formulation in full, first mentioning parenthetically the blossoms, and then, at the end, the fruit.

Here is the resolution on a provisional government adopted by the Caucasian Conference of new-*Iskra* supporters:

"Whereas we consider it to be our task to take advantage of the revolutionary situation so as to deepen [of course! They should have added: "*à la* Martynov!"] Social-Democratic consciousness in the proletariat [only to render the consciousness more profound, and not to win a republic? What a "profound" conception of revolution!] and in order to secure for the Party complete freedom to criticise the nascent bourgeois-state system [it is not our business to secure a republic! Our business is only to secure freedom of criticism. Anarchist ideas engender anarchist language: "bourgeois-state" system!], the Conference declares itself against the formation of a Social-Democratic provisional government, and entering such a government [recall the resolution passed by the Bakuninists ten months before the Spanish revolution and referred to by Engels: see *Proletary*, No. 3][36], and considers it to be the most expedient course to exercise pressure from without [from below and not from above] upon the bourgeois provisional government in order to secure a feasible measure [!?] of democratisation of the state system. The Conference believes that the formation of a provisional government by Social-Democrats, or their entering such a government

would lead, on the one hand, to the masses of the proletariat becoming disappointed in the Social-Democratic Party and abandoning it, because the Social-Democrats, despite the seizure of power, would not be able to satisfy the pressing needs of the working class, including the establishment of socialism [a republic is not a pressing need! The authors in their innocence do not notice that they are speaking purely anarchist language, as if they were repudiating participation in bourgeois revolutions!], and, on the other hand, *would cause the bourgeois classes to recoil from the revolution and thus diminish its sweep.*"

That is the crux of the matter. That is where anarchist ideas become interwoven (as is constantly the case among the West-European Bernsteinians too) with the sheerest opportunism. Just imagine: these people will not enter a provisional government because that would cause the bourgeoisie to recoil from the revolution, thereby diminishing the sweep of the revolution! Here, indeed, we have the new-*Iskra* philosophy as a whole, in a pure and consistent form: since the revolution is a bourgeois revolution, we must bow to bourgeois philistinism and make way for it. If we are even in part, even for a moment, guided by the consideration that our participation may cause the bourgeoisie to recoil, we thereby simply hand over leadership of the revolution entirely to the bourgeois classes. We thereby place the proletariat entirely under the tutelage of the bourgeoisie (while retaining complete "freedom of criticism"!!) compelling the proletariat to be moderate and meek, so that the bourgeoisie should not recoil. We emasculate the most vital needs of the proletariat, namely, its political needs—which the Economists and their imitators have never properly understood—so as not to make the bourgeoisie recoil. We go over completely from the platform of revolutionary struggle for the achievement of democracy to the extent required by the proletariat, to a platform of chaffering with the bourgeoisie, buying the bourgeoisie's voluntary consent ("so that it should not recoil") at the price of our principles, by betraying the revolution.

In two short lines, the Caucasian new-Iskrists managed to express the gist of the tactic of betraying revolution and

converting the proletariat into a wretched appendage of the bourgeois classes. That which we deduced above from the errors of the new-*Iskra* tendency we now see elevated to a clear and definite principle, viz., following in the wake of the monarchist bourgeoisie. Since the establishment of a republic would make the bourgeoisie recoil (and is already doing so—Mr. Struve is an example), down with the fight for a republic. Since every energetic and consistent democratic demand on the part of the proletariat makes the bourgeoisie recoil, always and everywhere in the world—hide in your lairs, working-men; act only from without; do not dream of using, in the interests of the revolution, the instruments and weapons of the "bourgeois-state" system; reserve for yourselves "freedom of criticism"!

The fundamental fallacy in their very conception of the term "bourgeois revolution" has come to the surface. The Martynov or new-*Iskra* "conception" of this term leads directly to the proletariat's cause being betrayed to the bourgeoisie.

Those who have forgotten the old Economism and do not study or remember it will find it difficult to understand the present resurgence of Economism. Call to mind the Bernsteinian *Credo*.[37] From "purely proletarian" views and programmes its authors drew the following conclusion: we Social-Democrats must concern ourselves with economics, with the real working-class cause, with freedom to criticise all political chicanery, with really rendering Social-Democratic work more profound. Politics are for the liberals. God save us from falling into "revolutionism": that will make the bourgeoisie recoil. Those who will re-read the whole *Credo* or the Separate Supplement to No. 9 of *Rabochaya Mysl* (September 1899)[38] will discern the entire course of this reasoning.

Today we have the same thing, only on a large scale, applied to an appraisal of the whole of the "great" Russian revolution—alas, vulgarised and reduced in advance to a travesty by the theoreticians of orthodox philistinism! We Social-Democrats must concern ourselves with freedom of criticism, with making class-consciousness more profound, with action from without. They, the bourgeois classes, must have freedom to act, a free field for revolutionary

(read: liberal) leadership, freedom to effect "reforms" from above.

These vulgarisers of Marxism have-never given thought to what Marx said about the need to replace the weapon of criticism by the criticism of weapons.[39] Taking the name of Marx in vain they, in actual fact, draw up resolutions on tactics wholly in the spirit of the Frankfort bourgeois windbags, who freely criticised absolutism and deepened democratic consciousness, but failed to understand that a time of revolution is a time of action, of action from both above and below. By turning Marxism into sophistry they have turned the ideology of the advanced, the most determined, and energetic revolutionary class into an ideology of its most backward strata, of those who shrink from difficult revolutionary-democratic tasks, and leave them to Messrs. the Struves to take care of.

If the bourgeois classes recoil from revolution because Social-Democrats enter a revolutionary government they will thereby "diminish the sweep" of the revolution.

Listen to that, Russian workers: the sweep of the revolution will be the mightier if it is effected by the Struves, who are not scared of the Social-Democrats, and do not want victory over tsarism, but want to come to terms with it. The sweep of the revolution will be mightier if the first of the two possible outcomes outlined above eventuates, i.e., if the monarchist bourgeoisie comes to terms with the autocracy on a "constitution" *à la* Shipov!

Social-Democrats, who write such disgraceful things in resolutions for the guidance of the whole Party, or who approve of such "apt" resolutions, are so blinded by sophistry, which has utterly driven the living spirit out of Marxism, that they fail to notice that these resolutions turn all their other fine words into empty phrases. Take any of their articles in *Iskra*, or even the notorious pamphlet written by our notorious Martynov—there you will read about a *popular* insurrection, about carrying the revolution to *completion*, about striving to rely upon the *common people* in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie. However, all these excellent things become miserable phrases as soon as you accept or approve the idea that "the sweep of the revolution" will be "diminished" as a consequence of the bourgeoisie's

alienation. These are the alternatives, gentlemen: either we, together with the people, must strive to carry out the revolution and win complete victory over tsarism *despite* the inconsistent, self-seeking, and cowardly bourgeoisie, or else we do not accept this "despite", and are afraid that the bourgeoisie may "recoil" from the revolution; in the second case we are betraying the proletariat and the people to the bourgeoisie—the inconsistent, self-seeking, and cowardly bourgeoisie.

Don't take it into your heads to misinterpret my words. Don't shrill that you are being accused of deliberate treachery. No, you have always crawled towards the marsh, and have at last crawled into it, just as unconsciously as the Economists of old, who were irresistibly and irrevocably drawn down the inclined plane of "deeper" Marxism, until it at last became an anti-revolutionary, soulless, and lifeless intellectual pose.

Have you, gentlemen, ever given thought to real social forces that determine "the sweep of the revolution"? Let us disregard the foreign political forces, the international combinations, which have developed very favourably for us at the present time, but which we all leave out of the discussion, and rightly so, inasmuch as we are concerned with the question of Russia's internal forces. Examine these internal social forces. Aligned against the revolution are the autocracy, the imperial court, the police, the bureaucracy, the army, and a handful of the aristocracy. The deeper the indignation of the people grows, the less reliable the troops become, and the more the bureaucracy wavers. Moreover, the bourgeoisie, on the whole, is now in favour of revolution, zealously speechifying about liberty and holding forth more and more frequently in the name of the people and even in the name of the revolution.* But we Marxists all know from theory and from daily and hourly observation of our liberals, Zemstvo people, and *Osvobozhdeniye* supporters that the bourgeoisie is inconsistent, self-seeking, and cowardly in its support of the revolution. The bourgeoisie, in the mass, will inevitably turn towards counter-revolution,

* Of interest in this connection is Mr. Struve's open letter to Jaurès recently published by the latter in *l'Humanité*[40] and by Mr. Struve in *Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 72.

towards the autocracy, against the revolution, and against the people, as soon as its narrow, selfish interests are met, as soon as it "recoils" from consistent democracy (*and it is already recoiling from it!*). There remains the "people", that is, the proletariat and the peasantry: the proletariat alone can be relied on to march on to the end, for it goes far beyond the democratic revolution. That is why the proletariat fights in the forefront for a republic and contemptuously rejects stupid and unworthy advice to take into account the possibility of the bourgeoisie recoiling. The peasantry includes a great number of semi-proletarian as well as petty-bourgeois elements. This makes it also unstable, compelling the proletariat to rally in a strictly class party. However, the instability of the peasantry differs radically from that of the bourgeoisie, for at present the peasantry is interested not so much in the absolute preservation of private property as in the confiscation of the landed estates, one of the principal forms of private property. Without thereby becoming socialist, or ceasing to be petty-bourgeois, the peasantry is capable of becoming a wholehearted and most radical adherent of the democratic revolution. The peasantry will inevitably become such if only the course of revolutionary events, which brings it enlightenment, is not prematurely cut short by the treachery of the bourgeoisie and the defeat of the proletariat. Subject to this condition the peasantry will inevitably become a bulwark of the revolution and the republic, for only a completely victorious revolution can give the peasantry *everything* in the sphere of agrarian reforms—*everything* that the peasants desire, dream of, and truly need (not for the abolition of capitalism as the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" imagine, but) in order to emerge from the mire of semi-serfdom, from the gloom of oppression and servitude, in order to improve their living conditions, as much as they can be improved within the system of commodity production.

Moreover, it is not only by the prospect of radical agrarian reform that the peasantry is attached to the revolution, but by all its general and permanent interests as well. Even when fighting with the proletariat, the peasantry stands in need of democracy, for only a democratic system is capable of accurately expressing its interests and ensuring its pre-

dominance as a mass, as the majority. The more enlightened the peasantry becomes (and since the war with Japan it is becoming enlightened at a pace unsuspected by many who are accustomed to measure enlightenment with the school yardstick), the more consistently and resolutely will it stand for a thoroughgoing democratic revolution; for, unlike the bourgeoisie, it has nothing to fear from the people's supremacy, but on the contrary stands to gain by it. A democratic republic will become the peasantry's ideal as soon as it begins to throw off its naïve monarchism, because the conscious monarchism of the bourgeois stockjobbers (with an upper chamber, etc.) implies for the peasantry the same absence of rights and the same oppression and ignorance as it suffers today, only slightly polished over with the varnish of European constitutionalism.

That is why, as a class, the bourgeoisie naturally and inevitably tends to come under the wing of the liberal-monarchist party, while the peasantry, in the mass, tends to come under the leadership of the revolutionary and republican party. That is why the bourgeoisie is incapable of carrying through the democratic revolution to its consummation, while the peasantry is capable of doing so, and we must exert all our efforts to help it do so.

The objection may be raised that this goes without saying, is all ABC, something that all Social-Democrats understand perfectly well. No, that is not the case; it is not understood by those who can talk about "the diminishing sweep" of the revolution as a consequence of the bourgeoisie falling away from it. Such people repeat the words of our agrarian programme, which they have learned by rote without understanding their meaning, for otherwise they would not be frightened by the concept of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, which inevitably follows from the entire Marxist world outlook and from our programme; otherwise they would not restrict the sweep of the great Russian revolution to the limits to which the bourgeoisie is prepared to go. Such people defeat their abstract Marxist revolutionary phrases by their concrete anti-Marxist and anti-revolutionary resolutions.

Those who really understand the role of the peasantry in a victorious Russian revolution would not dream of saying

that the sweep of the revolution will be diminished if the bourgeoisie recoils from it. For, in actual fact, the Russian revolution will begin to assume its real sweep, and will really assume the widest revolutionary sweep possible in the epoch of bourgeois-democratic revolution, only when the bourgeoisie recoils from it and when the masses of the peasantry come out as active revolutionaries side by side with the proletariat. To be consistently carried through to the end, our democratic revolution must rely on forces capable of paralysing the inevitable inconsistency of the bourgeoisie (i.e., capable precisely of "making it recoil from the revolution", which the Caucasian adherents of *Iskra* fear so much because of their thoughtlessness).

The proletariat must carry the democratic revolution to completion, allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush the autocracy's resistance by force and paralyse the bourgeoisie's instability. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population, so as to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance by force and paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. Such are the tasks of the proletariat, so narrowly presented by the new-*Iskra* group in all their arguments and resolutions on the sweep of the revolution.

One circumstance, however, should not be forgotten, one that is frequently lost sight of in discussions about the "sweep" of the revolution. It should not be forgotten that it is not a question of the difficulties presented by this problem, but the way in which its solution is to be sought and attained. It is not a question of whether it is easy or difficult to render the sweep of the revolution mighty and invincible, but of how to act so as to make that sweep more powerful. It is on the fundamental nature of our activities, the direction they should follow, that our views differ. We emphasise this because inattentive and unscrupulous people only too frequently confuse two different problems, viz., that of the direction to be followed, i.e., the choice of one of two different roads, and that of the ease of attaining our goal, or the nearness of its attainment along a given road.

In the foregoing we have not dealt with this last problem at all because it has not evoked any disagreement or differ-

ences in the Party. The problem itself is, of course, extremely important and deserving of the most serious attention from all Social-Democrats. It would be unforgivable optimism to forget the difficulties involved in drawing into the movement the masses not only of the working class, but also of the peasantry. These difficulties have more than once wrecked efforts to carry through a democratic revolution to completion, the inconsistent and self-seeking bourgeoisie triumphing most of all, because it has "made capital" in the shape of monarchist protection against the people, at the same time "preserving the virginity" of liberalism ... or of the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend. However, difficulty does not imply impossibility. The important thing is to be confident that the path chosen is the right one, this confidence multiplying a hundredfold revolutionary energy and revolutionary enthusiasm, which can perform miracles.

The depth of the rift among present-day Social-Democrats on the question of the path to be chosen can at once be seen by comparing the Caucasian resolution of the new-*Iskra* supporters with the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The Congress resolution says: the bourgeoisie is inconsistent and will without fail try to deprive us of the gains of the revolution. Therefore, make more energetic preparations for the fight, comrades and workers! Arm yourselves, win the peasantry over to your side! We shall not, without a struggle, surrender our revolutionary gains to the self-seeking bourgeoisie. The resolution of the Caucasian new-*Iskra* supporters says: the bourgeoisie is inconsistent and may recoil from the revolution. Therefore, comrades and workers, please do not think of joining a provisional government, for, if you do, the bourgeoisie will certainly recoil, and the sweep of the revolution will thereby be diminished!

One side says: advance the revolution to its consummation despite resistance or passivity on the part of the inconsistent bourgeoisie.

The other side says: do not think of independently advancing the revolution to completion, for if you do, the inconsistent bourgeoisie will recoil from it.

Are these not two diametrically opposite paths? Is it not obvious that one set of tactics absolutely excludes the other,

that the first tactics is the only correct tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy, while the second is in fact purely *Osvobozhdeniye* tactics?

13. CONCLUSION. DARE WE WIN?

People who are superficially acquainted with the state of affairs in Russian Social-Democracy, or who judge as mere onlookers, with no knowledge of the whole history of our inner-Party struggle since the days of Economism, very often dismiss the disagreements on tactics which have now taken shape, especially after the Third Congress, with the simple argument that there are two natural, inevitable, and quite reconcilable trends in every Social-Democratic movement. One side, they say, lays special emphasis on the ordinary, current, and everyday work, on the necessity of developing propaganda and agitation, of preparing forces, deepening the movement, etc., while the other side lays emphasis on the militant, general political, revolutionary tasks of the movement, points to the necessity of insurrection, and advances the slogans of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship, and a provisional revolutionary government. Neither side should exaggerate, they say; extremes are bad in both cases (and, generally speaking, everywhere in the world), etc., etc.

The cheap truism of the pedestrian (and "political" in quotation marks) wisdom undoubtedly contained in such arguments, too often conceals an inability to understand the urgent and acute needs of the Party. Take the present-day tactical differences among Russian Social-Democrats. Of course, the special emphasis on the everyday, routine aspect of the work, such as we see in the new-*Iskra* arguments about tactics, could not of itself present any danger or give rise to any divergence of opinion regarding tactical slogans. But it is sufficient to compare the resolutions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party with the Conference resolutions for this divergence to become striking.

What, then, is the trouble? In the first place, it is not enough to speak in the abstract of two currents in the movement, and of the harmfulness of extremes. One must know concretely what ails a given movement at a given time, and

what constitutes the real political danger to the Party at the present time. Secondly, one must know what real political forces profit by the tactical slogans advanced—or perhaps by the absence of certain slogans. If one were to listen to the new-Iskrists one would arrive at the conclusion that the Social-Democratic Party is threatened with the danger of throwing overboard propaganda and agitation, the economic struggle, and criticism of bourgeois democracy, the danger of becoming inordinately absorbed in military preparations, armed attacks, the seizure of power, etc. Actually, however, real danger is threatening the Party from an entirely different quarter. Anyone who is at all familiar with the state of the movement, anyone who follows it carefully and thoughtfully, cannot fail to see the ridiculous aspect of the new-Iskrists' fears. The entire work of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has already taken definite and unvarying shape, which absolutely guarantees that our main attention will be fixed on propaganda and agitation, extemporaneous and mass meetings, the distribution of leaflets and pamphlets, assisting in the economic struggle and championing the slogans of that struggle. There is not a single Party committee, not a single district committee, not a single central delegates' meeting or a single factory group where ninety-nine per cent of all the attention, energy, and time is not always and invariably devoted to these functions, which have become firmly established ever since the middle of the nineties. Only those who are entirely unfamiliar with the movement do not know that. Only very naïve or ill-informed people will accept new *Iskra*'s repetition of stale truths at their face value, when that is done with an air of great importance.

The fact is that, far from displaying excessive zeal with regard to the tasks of insurrection, to general political slogans and to giving leadership to the entire popular revolution, we, on the contrary, display a most striking *backwardness* in this very respect, a backwardness which constitutes our greatest weakness and is a real danger to the movement, which may degenerate, and in some places is degenerating, from one that is revolutionary in deed into one that is revolutionary in word. Among the many, many hundreds of organisations, groups, and circles that are conducting the work of the Party you will not find one which has not, since its

very inception, conducted the kind of day-by-day work the new-*Iskra* wiseacres now talk of with the air of people who have discovered new truths. On the other hand, you will find only an insignificant percentage of groups and circles that have understood the tasks an insurrection entails, have begun to carry them out, and have realised the necessity of leading the entire popular revolution against tsarism, the necessity of advancing certain definite progressive slogans and no other, for that purpose.

We have incredibly fallen behind our progressive and genuinely revolutionary tasks; in very many instances we have not even become aware of them; here and there we have failed to notice that revolutionary bourgeois democracy has gained strength owing to our backwardness in this respect. But, with their backs turned to the course of events and the requirements of the times, the new-*Iskra* writers keep insistently repeating: "Don't forget the old! Don't let yourselves be carried away by the new!" This is the unvarying *leit-motiv* in all the important resolutions of the Conference; whereas in the Congress resolutions you just as unvaryingly read: while confirming the old (but not stopping to masticate it over and over again precisely because it is old and has already been settled and recorded in literature, in resolutions and by experience), we bring forward a new task, draw attention to it, issue a new slogan, and demand that genuinely revolutionary Social-Democrats immediately set to work to put it into effect.

That is how matters really stand with regard to the question of the two trends in Social-Democratic tactics. The revolutionary period has presented new tasks, which only the totally blind can fail to see. Some Social-Democrats unhesitatingly recognise these tasks and place them on the order of the day, declaring: the armed uprising brooks no delay; prepare yourselves for it immediately and energetically; remember that it is indispensable for a decisive victory; bring forward slogans for a republic, for a provisional government, for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Other Social-Democrats, however, draw back, mark time, write prefaces instead of giving slogans; instead of seeing what is new, while confirming what is old, they masticate the latter tediously and at great

length, inventing pretexts to avoid the new, unable to determine the conditions for a decisive victory or to bring forward slogans which alone are in line with a striving to achieve full victory.

The political outcome of this tail-ism stares us in the face. The fable about a *rapprochement* between the "majority" of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and revolutionary bourgeois democracy remains a fable unconfirmed by a single political fact, by a single important resolution of the "Bolsheviks" or a single document of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. On the other hand, the opportunist, monarchist bourgeoisie, as represented by the *Osvobozhdeniye*, has long been *welcoming* the trends in the "principles" advocated by the new-*Iskra* group, and is now actually using their stream to drive its ~ill and is adopting their catchwords and "ideas", which are directed against "secrecy" and "riots", against exaggerating the "technical" aspect of the revolution, against openly proclaiming the slogan of insurrection, against the "revolutionism" of extreme demands, etc., etc. The resolution of an entire Conference of "Menshevik" Social-Democrats in the Caucasus and the endorsement of that resolution by the editors of the new *Iskra* sums up the whole matter politically in no mistakable way: what if the bourgeoisie should recoil in case the proletariat takes part in a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship! This puts the matter in a nutshell and gives the finishing touches to the proletariat's transformation into an appendage to the monarchist bourgeoisie. The *political significance* of the new *Iskra*'s tail-ism is thereby proved in fact—not by a casual observation from some individual but by a resolution especially endorsed by an entire trend.

Anyone who gives thought to these facts will understand the real significance of stock references to two sides and two trends in the Social-Democratic movement. For a full-scale study of these trends one should take Bernsteinism. In exactly the same way the Bernsteinians have been dinning into our ears that it is they who understand the proletariat's true needs and the tasks of building up its forces, the task of deepening all the work, preparing the elements of a new society, and the task of propaganda and agitation. Bernstein says: we demand a frank recognition of that which is, thus sanctifying "move-

ment" *without* any "ultimate aim", sanctifying defensive tactics alone, preaching the tactics of fear "lest the bourgeoisie recoil". So the Bernsteinians raised an outcry against the "Jacobinism" of the revolutionary Social-Democrats, against "publicists" who fail to understand the "workers' initiative", etc., etc. In reality, as everyone knows, revolutionary Social-Democrats have never even thought of abandoning day-by-day, petty work, the mustering of forces, etc., etc. All they demanded was a clear understanding of the ultimate aim, a clear presentation of the revolutionary tasks; they wanted to raise the semi-proletarian and semi-petty-bourgeois strata to the revolutionary level of the proletariat—not to reduce the latter level to that of opportunist considerations such as "lest the bourgeoisie recoil". Perhaps the most vivid expression of this rift between the intellectual opportunist wing and the proletarian revolutionary wing of the Party was the question: *dürfen wir siegen?* "Dare we win?" Is it permissible for us to win? Would it not be dangerous for us to win? Ought we to win? This question, so strange at first sight, was however raised and had to be raised, because the opportunists were afraid of victory, were frightening the proletariat away from it, predicting that trouble would come of it and ridiculing slogans that straightforwardly called for it.

The same fundamental division into an intellectual-opportunist and proletarian-revolutionary trend exists among us too, with the very material difference, however, that here we are faced with the question of a democratic, not of a socialist revolution. The question "dare we win?", which seems so absurd at first sight, has been raised among us as well. It has been raised by Martynov in his *Two Dictatorships*, wherein he prophesies dire misfortune if we prepare well for an insurrection, and carry it out quite successfully. The question has been raised in all the new-*Iskra* literature dealing with a provisional revolutionary government, and persistent if futile efforts have all the time been made to liken Millerand's participation in a bourgeois-opportunist government to Varlin's[41] participation in a petty-bourgeois revolutionary government. It is embodied in the resolution: "lest the bourgeoisie recoil". And although Kautsky, for instance, now tries to wax ironical and says that our dispute about a

provisional revolutionary government is like sharing out the meat before the bear is killed, this irony only proves that even clever and revolutionary Social-Democrats are liable to put their foot in it when they talk about something they know of only by hearsay. German Social-Democracy is not yet so near to killing its bear (carrying out a socialist revolution), but the dispute as to whether we "dare" kill the bear has been of enormous importance from the point of view of principles and of practical politics. Russian Social-Democrats are not yet so close to being able to "kill their bear" (carry out a democratic revolution), but the question as to whether we "dare" kill it is of extreme importance to the whole future of Russia and that of Russian Social-Democracy. An army cannot be energetically and successfully mustered and led unless we are sure that we "dare" win.

Take our old Economists. They, too, clamoured that their opponents were conspirators and Jacobins (see *Rabocheye Dyelo*, especially No. 10, and Martynov's speech at the Second Congress, in the debate on the programme), that by plunging into politics they were divorcing themselves from the masses, that they were losing sight of the fundamentals of the working-class movement, ignoring the workers' initiative, etc., etc. In reality these supporters of "workers' initiative" were opportunist intellectuals, who tried to foist on the workers their own narrow and philistine conception of the tasks of the proletariat. In reality the opponents of Economism, as everyone can see from the old *Iskra*, did not neglect or relegate into the background any of the aspects of Social-Democratic work, nor did they in the least forget the economic struggle; at the same time they were able to present the urgent and immediate political tasks in their full scope and thus opposed the transformation of the workers' party into an "economic" appendage to the liberal bourgeoisie.

The Economists learned by rote that politics are based on economics and "understood" this to mean that the political struggle should be reduced to the level of the economic struggle. The new-Iskrists have learned by rote that in its economic essence, the democratic revolution is a bourgeois revolution, and "understand" this to mean that the democratic aims of the proletariat should be lowered to the level of bourgeois moderation, a level beyond which "the bourgeoisie

will recoil". On the pretext of deepening their work, on the pretext of rousing the workers' initiative and pursuing a purely class policy, the Economists were actually delivering the working class into the hands of the liberal-bourgeois politicians, i.e., were leading the Party along a path whose objective significance was exactly such. On the same pretexts the new-Iskrists are actually betraying to the bourgeoisie the interests of the proletariat in the democratic revolution, i.e., are leading the Party along a path whose objective significance is exactly such. The Economists thought that leadership in the political struggle was not the concern of Social-Democrats, but, properly speaking, that of the liberals. The new-Iskrists think that the active conduct of the democratic revolution is no concern of the Social-Democrats, but, properly speaking, that of the democratic bourgeoisie, for, they argue, the proletariat's guidance and pre-eminent part will "diminish the sweep" of the revolution.

In short, the new-Iskrists are imitators of Economism, not only in having their origin at the Second Party Congress, but also in the manner in which they now present the tactical tasks of the proletariat in the democratic revolution. They, too, constitute an intellectual-opportunist wing of the Party. In the sphere of organisation they made their *début* with the anarchist individualism of intellectuals and ended up with "disorganisation-as-process", establishing in the "Rules"[42] adopted by the Conference the separation of Party publishing activities from the Party organisation, and an indirect and practically four-stage system of elections, a system of Bonapartist plebiscites instead of democratic representation, and finally the principle of "agreements" between the part and the whole. In Party tactics they slid down the same inclined plane. In the "plan of the Zemstvo campaign" they declared that addresses to the Zemstvo-ists were "the highest type of demonstration", and discerned only two active forces on the political scene (on the eve of January 9!)—the government and the bourgeois democrats. They made the urgent task of arming the people "more profound" by replacing a direct and practical slogan with a call to arm the people with a burning desire to arm themselves. In their official resolutions they have distorted and emascu-

lated the tasks connected with an insurrection, with the establishment of a provisional government, and with a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship. "Lest the bourgeoisie recoil"—this final chord of their latest resolution throws clear light on the question of where their path is leading the Party.

In its social and economic essence, the democratic revolution in Russia is a bourgeois revolution. It is, however, not enough merely to repeat this correct Marxist proposition. It has to be properly understood and properly applied to political slogans. In general, all political liberty founded on present-day, i.e., capitalist, relations of production is bourgeois liberty. The demand for liberty expresses primarily the interests of the bourgeoisie. Its representatives were the first to raise this demand. Its supporters have everywhere used like masters the liberty they acquired, reducing it to moderate and meticulous bourgeois doses, combining it with the most subtle suppression of the revolutionary proletariat in peaceful times, and with savage suppression in times of storm.

But only rebel Narodniks, anarchists, and Economists could conclude therefrom that the struggle for liberty should be negated or disparaged. These intellectualist-philistine doctrines could be foisted on the proletariat only for a time and against its will. The proletariat has always realised instinctively that it needs political liberty, needs it more than anyone else, although the immediate effect of that liberty will be to strengthen and organise the bourgeoisie. It is not by evading the class struggle that the proletariat expects to find its salvation, but by developing it, by extending its scope, its consciousness, organisation, and resoluteness. Whoever disparages the tasks of the political struggle transforms the Social-Democrat from a tribune of the people into a trade union secretary. Whoever disparages the proletarian tasks in a democratic bourgeois revolution transforms the Social-Democrat from a leader of the people's revolution into a leader of a free labour union.

Yes, the *people*'s revolution. Social-Democracy has fought, and is quite rightly fighting, against the bourgeois-democratic abuse of the word "people". It demands that this word shall not be used to cover up failure to understand

class antagonisms within the people. It insists categorically on the need for complete class independence for the party of the proletariat. However, it does not divide the "people" into "classes" so that the advanced class will become locked up within itself, will confine itself within narrow limits, and emasculate its activity for fear that the economic rulers of the world will recoil; it does that so that the adanced class, which does not suffer from the half-heartedness, vacillation, and indecision of the intermediate classes, should fight with all the greater energy and enthusiasm for the cause of the whole people, at the head of the whole people.

That is what the present-day new-Iskrists so often fail to understand, people who substitute for active political slogans in the democratic revolution a mere pedantic repetition of the word "class", declined in all cases and genders!

The democratic revolution is bourgeois in nature. The slogan of a general redistribution, or "land and freedom"—that most widespread slogan of the peasant masses, downtrodden and ignorant, yet passionately yearning for light and happiness—is a bourgeois slogan. But we Marxists should know that there is not, nor can there be, any other path to real freedom for the proletariat and the peasantry, than the path of bourgeois freedom and bourgeois progress. We must not forget that there is not, nor can there be at the present time, any other means of bringing socialism nearer, than complete political liberty, than a democratic republic, than the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. As representatives of the advanced and only revolutionary class, revolutionary without any reservations, doubts, or looking back, we must confront the whole of the people with the tasks of the democratic revolution as extensively and boldly as possible and with the utmost initiative. To disparage these tasks means making a travesty of theoretical Marxism, distorting it in philistine fashion, while in practical politics it means placing the cause of the revolution into the hands of the bourgeoisie, which will inevitably recoil from the task of consistently effecting the revolution. The difficulties that lie on the road to complete victory of the revolution are very great. No one will be able

to blame the proletariat's representatives if, when they have done everything in their power, their efforts are defeated by the resistance of reaction, the treachery of the bourgeoisie, and the ignorance of the masses. But everybody, and, above all, the class-conscious proletariat will condemn Social-Democracy if it curtails the revolutionary energy of the democratic revolution and dampens revolutionary ardour because it is afraid to win, because it is actuated by the consideration: lest the bourgeoisie recoil.

Revolutions are the locomotives of history, said Marx.[43] Revolutions are festivals of the oppressed and the exploited. At no other time are the mass of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order, as at a time of revolution. At such times the people are capable of performing miracles, if judged by the limited, philistine yardstick of gradualist progress. But it is essential that leaders of the revolutionary parties, too, should advance their aims more comprehensively and boldly at such a time, so that their slogans shall always be in advance of the revolutionary initiative of the masses, serve as a beacon, reveal to them our democratic and socialist ideal in all its magnitude and splendour, and show them the shortest and most direct route to complete, absolute, and decisive victory. Let us leave to the opportunists of the *Osvobozhdeniye* bourgeoisie the task of inventing roundabout, circuitous paths of compromise, out of fear of the revolution and of the direct path. If we are forcibly compelled to drag ourselves along such paths we shall be able to fulfil our duty in petty, everyday work also. But first let the choice of path be decided in ruthless struggle. We shall be traitors, betrayers of the revolution, if we do not use this festive energy of the masses and their revolutionary ardour to wage a ruthless and self-sacrificing struggle for the direct and decisive path. Let the bourgeois opportunists contemplate the future reaction with craven fear. The workers will not be intimidated either by the thought that reaction intends to be terrible, or that the bourgeoisie proposes to recoil. The workers do not expect to make deals; they are not asking for petty concessions. What they are striving towards is ruthlessly to crush the reactionary forces, i.e., to set up a *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*.

Of course, in stormy times greater dangers threaten the ship of our Party than in periods of the smooth "sailing" of liberal progress, which means the painfully steady sucking of the working class's life-blood by its exploiters. Of course, the tasks of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship are infinitely more difficult and more complex than the tasks of an "extreme opposition", or of an exclusively parliamentary struggle. But whoever is consciously capable of preferring smooth sailing and the course of safe "opposition" in the present revolutionary situation had better abandon Social-Democratic work for a while, had better wait until the revolution is over, until the festive days have passed, when humdrum, everyday life starts again, and his narrow routine standards no longer strike such an abominably discordant note, or constitute such an ugly distortion of the tasks of the advanced class.

At the head of the whole people, and particularly of the peasantry—for complete freedom, for a consistent democratic revolution, for a republic! At the head of all the toilers and the exploited—for socialism! Such in practice must be the policy of the revolutionary proletariat, such is the class slogan which must permeate and determine the solution of every tactical problem, every practical step of the workers' party during the revolution.

EL BOICOT DE LA DUMA BULIGUIN Y LA INSURRECCION [1]

Después del 9 de enero, la autocracia y la burocracia habían debido ceder ante el movimiento revolucionario amenazante. El 18 de febrero, un rescrito dirigido por el emperador al nuevo ministro del Interior Buliguin, anunciaba la intención de "llamar, con la gracia de Dios, a hombres dignos, investidos por la confianza del pueblo, elegidos por la población, a participar en el estudio previo y en el examen de los proyectos de ley". En consecuencia, se institula una comisión encargada de elaborar la constitución nueva.

Como se ha visto, dicha concesión no satisfizo a nadie. En marzo, abril y mayo las huelgas parciales se declaran sin interrupción, estallando ora en un sitio ora en otro; las revueltas agrarias se extienden por un número cada vez más grande de distritos; las asambleas municipales, los congresos de intelectuales votan resoluciones políticas en las cuales se reclaman reformas serias. Hecho nuevo: los empleados, el personal médico, los escritores, los maestros de escuela, en una palabra, la "democracia", la pequeña burguesía de las ciudades que desde 1904 había sido despertada a la vida política por la Osvobojdénie, se agrupa en "uniones", corporativas y políticas a la vez y, bajo la presión de los acontecimientos, se orienta hacia los partidos de izquierda. El 8 y 9 de mayo, 14 de esas uniones se reúnen en congreso en Moscú, echan los cimientos de una "Unión de las Uniones" y reclaman una Asamblea constituyente.

El desastre naval de Tsu-Shima, el 14 de mayo, excita incluso a la burguesía menos avanzada.

Hacia esa época, la prensa gubernamental creyó deber dar algunos informes sobre la constitución que

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edición rusa, t. VI, págs. 408-418.

ba a dar a luz la comisión Buliguin: una "Duma", cuyo nombre señalaba ya el carácter consultivo de la misma, reunida durante mes y medio o dos meses por año; una Cámara alta que no era más que el Consejo de Estado ya existente, nombrado por el zar; en fin, un sistema de elecciones de tres grados que admitía al voto a todas las clases de la población, desde los burgueses y los campesinos que tenían alguna propiedad hasta los comerciantes, los grandes propietarios y el sector privilegiado de las profesiones liberales, pero no dejaba sitio alguno a los obreros y a los intelectuales pobres. Este proyecto, en presencia del régimen de dictadura que hacía reinar el general Trepov, de los pogroms organizados o tolerados por la policía, de la arbitrariedad exasperada de la burocracia y de las derrotas militares incesantes, no podía satisfacer a ninguno de los elementos de oposición. La diputación delegada por el congreso de los ziemstvos para saludar al zar en Peterhoff el 6 de junio de 1905, con su lealismo, que parecía ya desplazado, escandalizó a la "sociedad".

Pronto se produjo el más grave acontecimiento revolucionario ocurrido después del 9 de enero: la sublevación del acorazado Potemkin, sostenida por algunos otros buques de la escuadra del mar Negro (14 de junio). La entrada en contacto de los marinos sublevados y de los obreros huelguistas de Odesa, suscitó en esta ciudad desórdenes que tomaron el aspecto de una pequeña guerra civil. El 9 de julio estallaba en el gran centro textil de Lodz, en Polonia, una huelga general que se transformó bien pronto en insurrección parcial, con barricadas valientemente defendidas contra la tropa por destacamentos armados de guerrilleros obreros.

Entre tanto, el término de los trabajos de la comisión Buliguin se aproximaba y los diversos grupos fijaban su actitud frente a las elecciones próximas.

El III Congreso de la Unión de las Uniones, celebrado del 1 al 3 de julio en Terioki, en los alrededores de Petersburgo, pero en territorio finlandés para escapar a la policía, se mostró verdaderamente radical. Los 80 representantes condenaron unánimemente la parodia de representación popular ofrecida por el gobierno; una fuerte mayoría decidió emprender una vasta agitación para suscitar una protesta general, en forma de una huelga demostrativa de algunos días: impedir

por todos los medios las elecciones, y reclamar una verdadera representación popular: una resolución votada por 9 de las 16 uniones representadas probibía a los afiliados participar personalmente en las elecciones a la Duma de Estado y hacer ninguna agitación en su favor. Las uniones de los catedráticos y de los escritores, que querían participar en las elecciones para hacer triunfar a los candidatos democráticos, formaban la minoría.

Del 6 al 8 de julio de 1905 se celebró un Congreso semi-legal de los ziemstvos y de las municipalidades de las ciudades que hizo gran ruido. El "liberalismo" después de la democracia, iba también a tomar partido. No llegó, sin embargo, a hacerlo. La mayoría era partidaria de boicotear la "constitución" de Bulguin, pero como el comité de organización estaba en contra, se llegó a un acuerdo por medio del siguiente compromiso: dejar la cuestión pendiente hasta la publicación del proyecto y convocar entonces telegráficamente un nuevo congreso. El congreso no dejaba por eso de condenar en principio el proyecto oficial, adoptaba las reivindicaciones de la Osvobojdénie, es decir, la monarquía parlamentaria con una Cámara alta y una Cámara baja, y lanzaba un llamamiento al pueblo invitándole a unirse para conquistar la verdadera representación nacional y el sufragio universal.

Al contrario, el congreso de los municipales-constitucionalistas, que se reunió el 9, 10 y 11 de julio, decidió tomar parte en las elecciones y constituir a este efecto un nuevo partido, el partido constitucional-demócrata (que se llamó bien pronto, por sus iniciales, el partido K. D. o cadete).

Entre los socialdemócratas se produjo de nuevo una divergencia de táctica entre las dos fracciones separadas. Los mencheviques habían señalado ya en la Iskra (número 101, del 1 de junio) la importancia de la nueva fase en que entraba la revolución; era necesario estar prestos a utilizar los acontecimientos para hacer triunfar la reivindicación socialdemócrata: Asamblea constituyente elegida por el sufragio universal, igual, directo y secreto, y para esto formar "Comités obreros de agitación" semi-legales, que, en relación estrecha con el partido ilegal, utilizarían en ese sentido la campaña electoral, obligarían a las clases dotadas del derecho de voto a hacer reclamar por

sus representantes a la Duma la Constitución y las libertades necesarias. Estos Comités harían desde luego fuera de las elecciones legales en las cuales los obreros no tienen ninguna participación, sus elecciones propias, lo que podría conducir a "crear toda una red de órganos representativos de self-government revolucionario coronada por una asamblea representativa nacional revolucionaria", capaz de dictar su voluntad a todos los demás grupos progresivos. En el número 106 de la Iskra, del 18 de julio, Dan precisa esta táctica: nada de boicot pasivo, pues, con él se deja al proletariado disperso y se da a la reacción la posibilidad de agruparse; nada tampoco de huelga demostrativa ineficaz, sino comités obreros de agitación que organicen "la elección por el pueblo de sus diputados revolucionarios fuera del cuadro legal que será fijado por los proyectos ministeriales". Se tendrá así en la cima una tribuna política que permitirá acaso matar a la Duma de Buliguin, sustituyéndola por algo mejor, y la obligará, aún en el caso de que llegue a reunirse, a someterse o a desaparecer. Si hay entonces huelga general ya no será una simple manifestación, sino un medio de sostener el self-government revolucionario. Eso será el "prólogo posible de acontecimientos más tormentosos".

Tales son los planes a los cuales Lenin opone la táctica bolchevista. El III Congreso había dejado de lado la cuestión de la participación en las elecciones; pero, como el objetivo principal propuesto al partido era la insurrección, es evidente que los medios legales tales como la agitación electoral debían estarle subordinados.

∴

La situación política actual en Rusia es la siguiente: Es posible que pronto sea convocada la Duma Buliguin, es decir, una asamblea consultiva de representantes de los grandes propietarios agrarios y de la gran burguesía, elegidos bajo la vigilancia y con el concurso de los servidores del gobierno autocrático, con un sistema de sufragio de casta groseramente con-

THE BOYCOTT OF THE BULYGIN DUMA, AND INSURRECTION

At present the political situation in Russia is as follows: the Bulygin Duma may soon be convened—a consultative assembly of representatives of the landlords and the big bourgeoisie, elected under the supervision and with the assistance of the autocratic government's servants on the basis of an electoral system so indirect, so blatantly based on property and social-estate qualifications, that it is sheer mockery of the idea of popular representation. What should our attitude towards this Duma be? The liberal democrats give two replies to this question. The Left wing, represented by the "Union of Unions"—mostly representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia—is in favour of boycotting this Duma, of abstaining from participation in the elections, and of taking advantage of the opportunity for increased agitation for a democratic constitution on the basis of universal suffrage. The Right wing, as represented by the Zemstvo and Municipal Congress of July, or, to be more correct, by a certain section of that Congress, is opposed to a boycott and favours participation in the elections and getting as many of its candidates as possible elected to the Duma. True, the Congress has not yet passed any resolution on this question and has postponed the matter until the next Congress which is to be convened by telegraph following promulgation of the Bulygin "constitution". However, the opinion of liberal democracy's Right wing has already taken shape.

Revolutionary democracy, i.e., in the main, the proletariat, and Social-Democracy, the vehicle of its conscious expression, is, by and large, fully in favour of insurrection.

This difference in tactics has been correctly appraised by *Osvobozhdeniye*, organ of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie. Its latest issue (No. 74), on the one hand roundly condemns "open advocacy of insurrection" as "insane and criminal"; on the other hand it criticises the idea of a boycott as "fruitless for practical purposes" and expresses the conviction that not only the Zemstvo section of the Constitutional-"Democratic" (read: Monarchist) Party but the Union of Unions, too, will "pass their state examination", i.e., abandon the idea of a boycott.

The question arises: what attitude should the party of the class-conscious proletariat take towards the idea of a boycott, and what tactical slogan should it bring into the foreground for the masses of the people? For a reply to this question we must first of all call to mind the essence and radical significance of the Bulygin "constitution". It is, in fact, tsarism's deal with the landlords and big bourgeoisie, who, in return for innocent, pseudo-constitutional sops that are quite innocuous to the autocracy, are to be gradually drawn away from the revolution, i.e., from the fighting people, and reconciled with the autocracy. The possibility of such a deal cannot be doubted, since all our Constitutional-"Democratic" Party is eager to preserve the monarchy and the upper chamber (i.e., in advance to secure for the moneyed "upper ten thousand" political privileges and political domination in the country's system of state). Moreover, such a deal is sooner or later inevitable in one form or another, at least with a section of the bourgeoisie, for it is prescribed by the very class position of the bourgeoisie in the capitalist system. The only question is when and how this deal will take place. The task confronting the party of the proletariat is to delay conclusion of this deal for as long as possible, to split up the bourgeoisie as much as possible, to derive from the bourgeoisie's temporary appeals to the people the greatest possible advantage for the revolution, and meanwhile to prepare the forces of the revolutionary people (the proletariat and the peasantry) for the forcible overthrow of the autocracy and for the alienation, the neutralisation of the treacherous bourgeoisie.

In fact, the gist of the bourgeoisie's political position is, as we have frequently pointed out, that it stands between

the tsar and the people, and would play the part of the "honest broker" and steal into power behind the back of the militant people. That is why the bourgeoisie appeals to the tsar one day, and to the people the next, making "serious" and "business-like" proposals for a political deal to the former, and addressing empty phrases about liberty (Mr. I. Petrunkevich's speeches at the July Congress) to the latter. It is to our advantage that the bourgeoisie should appeal to the people, for by doing so it provides material that will help to rouse and enlighten politically those huge backward masses of people to reach whom through Social-Democratic agitation would be sheer utopianism for the time being. Let the bourgeoisie stir up those that are most backward; let it break the soil here and there; we shall untiringly sow the seeds of Social-Democracy in that soil. Everywhere in the West, in its struggle against autocracy the bourgeoisie was compelled to rouse the people's political consciousness, while at the same time striving to sow the seeds of bourgeois theories among the working class. It is for us to take advantage of the bourgeoisie's work of destroying the autocracy and systematically enlighten the working class concerning its socialist aims and the irreconcilable antagonism between its interests and those of the bourgeoisie.

Hence it is clear that our tactics at present should first of all consist in support for the idea of a boycott. The very question of a boycott lies within the bounds of bourgeois democracy. The working class is not directly interested in it, but it is definitely interested in supporting that section of bourgeois democracy which is more revolutionary; it is interested in extending and intensifying political agitation. A boycott of the Duma means a more vigorous appeal to the people by the bourgeoisie, a development of its agitation, a greater number of opportunities for our agitation, and a more intense political crisis, which is the source of the revolutionary movement. The participation of the liberal bourgeoisie in the Duma means a slackening in its agitation at the present time, its appealing more to the tsar than to the people, and the approach of a counter-revolutionary deal between the tsar and the bourgeoisie.

Even if it is not prevented from meeting, the Bulygin Duma must of necessity give rise to political conflicts that

the proletariat should not fail to take advantage of—but that is a matter for the future. It would be ridiculous to renounce utilising this bourgeois-bureaucratic Duma for purposes of agitation and struggle, but at the moment that is not the point. At present the Left wing of bourgeois democracy itself has raised the issue of waging a direct and immediate struggle against the Duma by means of a boycott, and we must exert all our efforts to support this more determined onslaught. We must take the bourgeois democrats, the *Osvobozhdeniye* people, at their word, give the widest publicity to their "Petrunkevich-like" phrases about an appeal to the people, expose them to the people, and show that the first and least real test of these phrases was the question of whether we should boycott the Duma (i.e., turn in protest to the people) or accept the Duma (i.e., abstain from protesting, go once more to the tsar, and accept this travesty of popular representation).

Secondly, we must exert every effort to make the boycott of real use in extending and intensifying agitation, so that it shall not be reduced to mere passive abstention from voting. If we are not mistaken this idea is already fairly widespread among the comrades working in Russia, who express it in the words: an *active* boycott. As distinct from passive abstention, an active boycott should imply increasing agitation tenfold, organising meetings everywhere, taking advantage of election meetings, even if we have to force our way into them, holding demonstrations, political strikes, and so on and so forth. It goes without saying that to further agitation and struggle in this connection, temporary agreements with various groups of revolutionary bourgeois democrats, generally permitted by a number of our Party resolutions, are especially expedient. But here we must, on the one hand, steadfastly preserve the class individuality of the party of the proletariat, and must not for a single moment abandon our Social-Democratic criticism of our bourgeois allies; on the other hand, we should be failing in our duty as the party of the advanced class if in our agitation we failed to produce an advanced revolutionary slogan at the present stage of the democratic revolution.

That is our third direct and immediate political task. As we have already said, "an active boycott" means agitation,

recruiting, organising revolutionary forces on a larger scale, with redoubled energy, and bringing redoubled pressure to bear. Such work, however, is unthinkable without a clear, precise, and immediate slogan. Only an armed uprising can be that slogan. The government's convocation of a crudely faked "popular" representative body provides excellent opportunities for agitation for a truly popular representative body, for making the broadest masses of the people understand that at present (after the tsar's frauds and his mockery of the people) only a provisional revolutionary government can convene a truly representative body, and that to establish such a government the victory of an insurrection and the actual overthrow of tsarist rule are necessary. It would be hard to imagine a better time for widespread agitation for an uprising and in order to conduct that agitation full clarity regarding the programme of a provisional revolutionary government is also necessary. This programme should consist of the *six* points which we have indicated previously (see *Proletary*, No. 7, "The Revolutionary Army and the Revolutionary Government"*): 1) convocation of a popular constituent assembly; 2) arming of the people; 3) political freedom—the immediate repeal of all laws that contradict it; 4) complete cultural and political freedom for all oppressed and disfranchised nationalities—the Russian people cannot win liberty for themselves without fighting for the liberty of the other nationalities; 5) an eight-hour working day; 6) the establishment of peasant committees for the support and implementation of all democratic reforms, among them agrarian reforms, up to and including the confiscation of the landlords' land.

To sum up: the most energetic support for the idea of a boycott; exposure of the Right wing of bourgeois democracy, which rejects the boycott, as traitors; making the boycott an active one, i.e., building up a most widespread agitation; advocating an insurrection and calling for the immediate organisation of combat squads and contingents of a revolutionary army for the overthrow of the autocracy and the establishment of a provisional revolutionary government; spreading and popularising the fundamental and absolutely

* See present edition, Vol. 8, pp. 566-67.—*Ed.*

obligatory programme of this provisional revolutionary government, a programme which is to serve as the banner of the uprising and as a model for all future repetitions of the Odessa events.

Such should be the tactics of the party of the class-conscious proletariat. In order to make this tactics perfectly clear and to achieve unity we must also deal with *Iskra*'s tactics. It is set forth in No. 106 of that paper in an article entitled "Defence or Attack". We shall not take up the minor and partial differences, which will dissolve at the first attempts to take action; we shall deal only with the fundamental difference. While quite correctly condemning a passive boycott, the *Iskra* contraposes to it the idea of the immediate "organisation of revolutionary self-government bodies", as a "possible prologue to an uprising". In *Iskra*'s opinion we must "seize the right to carry on agitation in the election campaign by establishing workers' agitation committees". These committees "must set themselves the aim of organising popular elections of revolutionary deputies by going outside the 'legal' limits which will be established by Ministerial Bills", we must "cover the country with a network of revolutionary self-government bodies".

Such a slogan is absolutely useless. Viewed in the light of the political tasks in general it is a jumble, while in the light of the immediate political situation it brings grist to the mill of the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend. The organisation of revolutionary self-government, the election of their own deputies by the people is not the *prologue* to an uprising, but its *epilogue*. To attempt to bring about this organisation now, before an uprising and apart from an uprising, means setting oneself absurd aims and causing confusion in the minds of the revolutionary proletariat. It is first of all necessary to win the victory in an uprising (if only in a single city) and to establish a provisional revolutionary government, so that the latter, as the organ of the uprising and the recognised leader of the revolutionary people, should be able to get down to the organisation of revolutionary self-government. To obscure the slogan of insurrection or relegate it into the background by proposing a slogan demanding the organisation of a revolutionary self-government is something like giving advice that the fly should first be caught and

then stuck on the fly-paper. If during the celebrated Odessa events our Odessa comrades had been advised to organise not a revolutionary army, but the election of deputies by the people of Odessa as a prologue to an uprising, those comrades would undoubtedly have laughed such advice to scorn. *Iskra* is repeating the mistake made by the Economists, who wished to see in the "struggle for rights" a prologue to the struggle against the autocracy. *Iskra* is reverting to the misadventure of the unfortunate "plan of the Zemstvo campaign", which obscured the slogan of insurrection with the theory of a "higher type of demonstration".

This is not the place to dwell on the origin of *Iskra*'s tactical blunder. We shall refer the interested reader to N. Lenin's pamphlet *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*. It is more important here to point out how the slogan of the new *Iskra* lapses into that of *Osvobozhdeniye*. In actual practice attempts to organise popular elections of deputies before the uprising is victorious would only play into the hands of the *Osvobozhdeniye* people with the result that the Social-Democrats would be trailing behind them. Until replaced by a provisional revolutionary government the autocracy will not permit the workers and the people to conduct any elections that can in any way be called popular (and Social-Democrats will not agree to a travesty of "popular" elections under the autocracy); but the *Osvobozhdeniye* League, Zemstvo members and the municipal councillors will conduct elections and blatantly pass them off as "popular", and as an expression of "revolutionary self-government". The line now taken by the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie consists in trying to avert an uprising, compel the autocracy to recognise the Zemstvo elections as popular elections without the people's victory over tsarism and convert the Zemstvo and municipal self-government bodies into organs of "revolutionary" (in the Petrunkevich sense) "self-government", without a real revolution. An excellent expression of this line is to be found in No. 74 of *Osvobozhdeniye*. It would be hard to imagine anything more disgusting than this ideologist of the cowardly bourgeoisie, who asserts that advocacy of insurrection "demoralises" both the army and the people! And this is said at

a time when even the blind can see that it is only through an uprising that the ordinary Russian citizen and soldier can save himself from utter demoralisation and vindicate his right to citizenship! The bourgeois Manilov pictures to himself an Arcadian idyll in which the mere pressure of "public opinion" alone "will compel the government to make concession after concession, until finally it can go no further and will have to hand over the power to a constituent assembly elected on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, direct elections, and a secret ballot, as is demanded by society ..." (! with an upper chamber?). "There is nothing at all improbable in this peaceful [!!] transition of power from the present government to a national constituent assembly, which will organise state and governmental power on a new basis." And this masterly philosophy of the cringing bourgeoisie is rounded off with the advice that the army, particularly the officers, should be won over; that a people's militia be established "without official authorisation", and that local self-government bodies (read: of landlords and capitalists) should be set up as "elements of a future provisional government".

There is method in *this* muddle. What the bourgeoisie wants is to be given power "peacefully", *without a popular uprising*, which may prove victorious, win a republic and genuine liberty, arm the proletariat, and rouse millions of peasants. To obscure the slogan of insurrection, to abandon it and make others follow suit, to advise the immediate establishment, by way of a "prologue", of popular self-government (to which only the Trubetskois, Petrunkeviches, Fyodorovs, and the like will be admitted)—that is what the bourgeoisie needs in order to betray the revolution and strike a bargain with the tsar (a monarchy with an upper chamber) *against* the "mob". Liberal Manilovism, therefore, voices the innermost thoughts of the money-bags, their most profound interests.

Iskra's Social-Democratic Manilovism expressed merely the thoughtlessness of a section of the Social-Democrats, their departure from the proletariat's only revolutionary tactics, viz., ruthless exposure of the bourgeois-opportunist illusions that peaceful concessions from tsarism are possible, that popular self-government can be instituted without

the autocracy being overthrown, and that election of deputies by the people is possible as a prologue to an uprising. No, we must clearly and resolutely show the necessity of an insurrection in the present state of affairs; we must issue a direct call for an uprising (without, of course, fixing the date beforehand) and call for the immediate organisation of a revolutionary army. Only the boldest and most widespread organisation of such an army can be the prologue to an uprising. Only an uprising can actually guarantee the victory of the revolution; of course, those who know the local conditions will always caution against attempts at a premature uprising. The real organisation of real people's self-government can take place only as the epilogue of a victorious uprising.

Proletary, No. 12,
August 16 (3), 1905

Published according to
the text in *Proletary*

¡DISCUTID SOBRE LA TACTICA, PERO DAD CONSIGNAS CLARAS! (1)

El 6 de agosto fué publicado el reglamento sobre la Duma de Imperio y la ley electoral. Los partidos y tendencias pudieron precisar su actitud frente a este gran hecho: la introducción de un régimen constitucional, por insuficiente que fuese, en Rusia, lo cual constituía la primera derrota, materialmente reconocida, del absolutismo.

La socialdemocracia continuaba dividida sobre la táctica a seguir. En tanto que los bolcheviques, inspirados por El Proletario, preconizaban el boicot unido a la preparación activa y concreta de la insurrección, los mencheviques tendían a ver el objetivo esencial en la elección de órganos de self-government revolucionario. El número 110 de la Iskra, aparecido el 10 de septiembre, publicaba incluso un artículo titulado "La socialdemocracia y la Duma" en el que Parvus desarrollaba un plan según el cual la socialdemocracia participaría en las elecciones y obtendría la presentación de candidaturas socialistas por medio de acuerdos con los elementos que gozaban del derecho de voto. Este artículo no solamente alteraba, en un sentido puramente parlamentario cuando el parlamentarismo no existía, la táctica socialdemócrata, sino que creaba una confusión extrema, pues, al mismo tiempo que preconizaba esos acuerdos con la burguesía más o menos liberal, veía en la insurrección popular el único medio "de obligar al gobierno a modificar el derecho electoral y a ampliar los derechos de la Duma", y aconsejaba que se penetrase por la fuerza en las reuniones electorales.

Así, Lenin, antes de hacer una crítica más detallada (que apareció en el mismo número de El Proletario) estimó necesario restablecer la claridad en los espíritus por medio del paralelo esquemático siguiente. Es preciso recordar que las opiniones atribuidas a la Iskra son especialmente las de Parvus, el cual, como dice el

(1) Obras completas, primera edición rusa, t. VI, págs. 468-469.

mismo Lenin, adoptaba la actitud de un "superhombre" superior a las dos fracciones del partido. Martov nos advierte en su Historia de la socialdemocracia que el plan de Parvus no tuvo ningún éxito entre los mencheviques.

***

La discusión sobre la táctica a seguir con respecto a la Duma se hace cada vez más ardiente, y el desacuerdo entre la *Iskra* y *El Proletario* cada día más profundo (1), sobre todo después del artículo de Parvus en la *Iskra*.

Discutir sobre la táctica es indispensable. Pero, al hacerlo, es preciso perseguir el máximo de claridad. La táctica es la línea de conducta política del partido. Se puede y se *debe* fundamentar ésta o la otra línea de conducta mediante la teoría, la historia, el análisis de la situación política, etc.; pero el partido de la clase militante debe, en todas sus discusiones, no perder de vista la necesidad de dar respuestas absolutamente claras *y que no admitan dos interpretaciones* a las preguntas concretas que se refieren a nuestra conducta política: ¿debemos obrar de esta o de la otra manera en el momento dado, sí o no?

Estas respuestas claras son obligatorias a fin de no exagerar ni embrollar nuestros desacuerdos y para que la clase obrera sepa con la mayor precisión cuáles son los consejos concretos que le dan, en un momento dado, unos u otros socialdemócratas.

Para aclarar nuestro debate con la *Iskra*, damos la lista de las cuestiones concretas que se plantean a propósito de la conducta política de la socialdemocracia en la campaña actual de agitación para la Duma. Como no pretendemos, ni mucho menos, que esta lista sea completa, estaremos muy reconocidos a todos los que nos señalen complementos, modificaciones o distinciones a hacer para tal o cual cuestión. No hay que decir que lo que se refiere a las reunio-

(1) Mártov había publicado en el número 110 de la *Iskra* una respuesta detallada al artículo de Lenin.

ARGUE ABOUT TACTICS, BUT GIVE CLEAR SLOGANS!

The argument about the tactics in respect of the State Duma is becoming more and more heated. The differences between *Iskra* and *Proletary* are becoming ever deeper, especially since Parvus's article in *Iskra*.

Tactics must be debated, but in this the utmost clarity must be striven for. Questions of tactics are questions of the Party's political conduct. A line of conduct can *and should* be grounded in theory, in historical references, in an analysis of the entire political situation, etc. But in all these discussions the party of a class engaged in a struggle should never lose sight of the need for absolutely clear answers—*which do not permit of a double interpretation*—to concrete questions of our political conduct: "yes" or "no"? Should this or that be done right now, at the given moment, or should it not be done?

Such clear replies are essential to prevent differences from being exaggerated or confused, and also to make definitely known to the working class the specific kind of advice being offered it by this or that group of Social-Democrats at a given moment.

With a view to introducing complete clarity into our controversy with *Iskra* we have drawn up the following list of concrete questions concerning the political conduct of the Social-Democrats in the present Duma election campaign. We do not in the least claim that this list is complete, and would welcome suggestions for amending, changing, or subdividing any of the questions. It stands to reason that what is said here concerning election meetings applies to all meetings in general.

WHAT IS THE ADVICE THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS ARE GIVING THE PROLETARIAT WITH REFERENCE TO THE STATE DUMA?

	Iskra	*Proletary*
1. Should workers endeavour to gain entry to election meetings?	Yes	Yes
2. Should workers endeavour to gain entry to election meetings even by force?	Yes	Yes
3. Should we speak at such meetings about the uselessness of the Duma and explain all the aims and the entire programme of Social-Democracy?	Yes	Yes
4. Should the workers and the people as a whole be called upon at such meetings to rise up in arms and form a revolutionary army and provisional Revolutionary government?	?	Yes
5. Should these slogans (point 4) be made the focus of our whole "Duma" campaign?	No	Yes
6. Should *Osvobozhdeniye* League members (or "Constitutional-Democrats") entering the State Duma be denounced as bourgeois traitors who are pursuing a policy of "compromise" with the tsar?	No	Yes
7. Should we Social-Democrats tell the people that it would be preferable to elect to the State Duma the Petrunkeviches rather than the Stakhevich, etc.?	Yes	No
8. Should we conclude any agreement whatever with the *Osvobozhdeniye* League on our support of the latter on the basis of certain conditions, demands, pledges, etc.?	Yes	No

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

	Iskra	*Proletary*
9. Should we make the slogan of "revolutionary self-government" the central point of our agitation?	Yes	No
10. Should we call upon the people immediately to elect, on the basis of universal suffrage, bodies of revolutionary self-government and through these a constituent assembly?	Yes	No
11. Should we elect Social-Democratic election committees? Should we put up Social-Democratic candidates for the State Duma?	Yes	No

Proletary, No. 18,
September 26 (13), 1905

Published according to
the text in *Proletary*

SOCIALISMO Y ANARQUIA [1]

Durante el mes de septiembre, la democracia rusa conquistó de hecho, frente a las autoridades desorientadas, las libertades de reunión, de asociación, de palabra y de prensa. Los mitines se celebraban en los anfiteatros de las universidades, dotadas el 27 de agosto de una amplia autonomía; los folletos perseguidos algunas semanes antes se vendian públicamente o se imprimian ya en Rusia; los obreros, sin esperar ninguna autorización, formaban sus sindicatos.

Los bolcheviques concibieron entonces la idea de un gran periódico diario que apareciese legalmente y que completase en Rusia la acción de El Proletario de Ginebra. A la sombra de los nombres de algunos literatos radicales, pero sin-partido, se podrian hacer pasar articulos de bolcheviques. Los primeros, arrastrados por la corriente revolucionaria, se prestaron voluntariamente a esta asociación. En fin, después de algunos retrasos, el periódico apareció en San Petersburgo bajo el título de Novaia Jizn (La Vida Nueva), a partir del 27 de octubre de 1905.

Cada concesión del gobierno parecia tener por único efecto reforzar la revolución. Una huelga, al principio paramente económica, que estallaba en una imprenta de Moscú el 19 de septiembre se veia instantáneamente sostenida por un amplio movimiento en las dos capitales. Una conferencia anodina reunida por las autoridades en San Petersburgo para estudiar la cuestión de las cajas de retiro de los ferrocarriles se declaró súbitamente organización profesional y política de todos los ferroviarios de Rusia (20 de septiembre). Habiendo circulado por Moscú el rumor, por otra parte falso, de la detención de varios miembros de dicha conferencia, el 7 de octubre estallaba una huelga que, propagándose de una estación a otra,

(1) Obras completas, primera edición rusa, t. VII, primera parte, págs. 39-41.

de una línea a otra, se extendía pronto hasta el Cáucaso y el Turquestán y se convertía, el 17 de octubre, en la huelga general de los ferroviarios. Por todas partes, por solidaridad y arrastrados por el movimiento, los obreros y los empleados, los estudiantes e incluso los abogados, los médicos y los jueces, abandonaron el trabajo. Era la huelga general en todo el Imperio. Las capitales se encontraban aisladas, las dificultades alimenticias se hacían ya sentir. El 17 de octubre el zar lanzó un manifiesto garantizando las libertades civiles ya conquistadas por el pueblo y transformando la Duma consultiva de Buliguin en una Cámara legislativa, elegida mediante un sistema ampliado de sufragio.

Los obreros sentían, en plena huelga, una vivo necesidad de organización. El 3 de octubre, en San Petersburgo, los delegados de varias fábricas habían invitado al proletariado a unirse a la huelga general por la libertad y el bienestar del pueblo y a elegir regularmente sus diputados a un "comité obrero" encargado de defender sus intereses, de coordinar los movimientos y de dirigir la huelga.

El 17 de octubre, los diputados obreros reunidos tomaban el nombre de Soviet. Desde entonces el Soviet celebró sus sesiones, publicó su periódico (las Izvestia), presentó sus reivindicaciones al gobierno, en fin, una vez la huelga terminada, el 21 de octubre, proclamó la jornada de ocho horas. Una segunda huelga general estalló en San Petersburgo el 2 de noviembre para sostener a los marinos sublevados en Cronstadt y para protestar contra el estado de sitio proclamado en Polonia. Esta vez, los fabricantes y el gobierno habían tenido tiempo de reaccionar y respondieron por el locaut. El Soviet se vió obligado a retroceder, pero incitando a los obreros a organizarse y a ponerse en relación con los campesinos revolucionarios, con el ejército y con la flota para los combates futuros decisivos. Tal era la marcha arrolladora de los acontecimientos.

El Soviet se había formado como un órgano representativo de todos los obreros, por consiguiente formalmente neutro con respecto a los partidos. Por este motivo estos últimos, en particular los bolcheviques, que habían llevado a su más alto grado la idea de partido, alimentaban con respecto al Soviet una cierta descon-

fianza. Los mencheviques mismos, a pesar de sus teorías sobre la iniciativa de las masas y el self-government revolucionario, del cual el Soviet podía parecer una realización tan brillante como inesperada, no hubiesen visto con disgusto que precisase su figura política. Así, el Consejo federal del partido socialdemócrata (que agrupaba desde hacía algún tiempo a bolcheviques y mencheviques) hizo, el 29 de octubre, plantear la cuestión de la adhesión del Soviet al programa socialdemócrata. Con esto se corría el riesgo de suscitar, en plena acción revolucionaria, una escisión en el proletariado. Afortunadamente, la mayoría de los diputados, aunque formada de socialdemócratas o de simpatizantes, se negó a abrir el debate. La cuestión continuó, no obstante, preocupando a las organizaciones y fué debatida en la prensa y en los mitines. Fué necesaria la llegada de Lenin, entre el 12 y el 14 de noviembre, para que se reconociese al Soviet, como órgano de combate de la clase obrera, sin distinción de partidos, el derecho a la existencia.

El Soviet y su Comité ejecutivo comprendían, además de los diputados obreros, representantes de los partidos obreros, a razón de tres por fracción, con voz pero sin voto. Se trataba de los partidos constituídos: las dos alas de la socialdemocracia y los socialistas-revolucionarios. Aparte de sus delegados oficiales, el partido socialdemócrata contaba en el Soviet con un número suficiente de miembros simpatizantes para asegurarle una influencia preponderante. A medida que se avanzaba, esta influencia iba creciendo.

Sin embargo, los progresos y la expansión del movimiento obrero habían dado nacimiento a otras tendencias.

Desde 1903 habían aparecido en Rusia, y principalmente en el Oeste y en Ukrania, grupos anarquistas. A partir de 1905, los anarquistas redoblan asimismo su actividad en Moscú, en Riga y en San Petersburgo. Publican periódicos y proclamas, toman la palabra en los mitines, desempeñan un papel importante en ciertas huelgas. La tendencia más difundida entre ellos era la que se inspiraba en la revista kropotkiniana Jlieb y Volia — Pan y Libertad — (publicada en Ginebra). Sin embargo, en octubre, se ve surgir en San Petersburgo un "grupo de anarquistas-comunistas" que preconiza, bajo el nombre de "acción directa", el terror

general, las expropiaciones y el pillaje de los almacenes. Este grupo tenía una imprenta y un depósito de explosivos para la fabricación de bombas. Es difícil decir si fué este grupo u otro el que en noviembre de 1917 pidió al Soviet que admitiese a sus representantes, con los mismos derechos que los de otras organizaciones revolucionarias, en su seno y en el Comité ejecutivo.

En todo caso, el Comité ejecutivo del Soviet, compuesto en su mayoría de mencheviques, rechazó esta petición, fundándose en motivos puramente de forma: la tradición de la II Internacional, la inexistencia de los anarquistas como partido.

Lenin acababa solamente entonces de romper con los literatos decadentes que formaban la mitad de la redacción de Novaia Jizn (La Nueva Vida) y de transformar este periódico en un órgano puramente bolchevista. El número 21 es el primero que lleva la divisa: "¡Proletarios de todos los países, unios!" y el subtítulo: "Partido obrero socialdemócrata de Rusia". Lenin aprovechó la ocasión que se le ofrecía para precisar su concepción del Soviet, diferente de la de muchos otros miembros del partido.

***

El Comité ejecutivo del Soviet de los diputados obreros ha rechazado ayer, 23 de noviembre, la petición presentada por los anarquistas de que sean admitidos sus representantes en el Comité ejecutivo y en el Soviet. El Comité ejecutivo motiva así su decisión:

"1.° En toda la práctica internacional, los congresos y conferencias socialistas no han tolerado jamás en su seno a representantes de los anarquistas, dado que estos últimos no admiten la lucha política como medio de alcanzar su ideal (1). 2.° Solamente pueden estar

(1) En el congreso obrero internacional de Bruselas, en 1891, se planteó la cuestión de dos delegados de organizaciones anarquistas, que fueron rechazados; otros dos anarquistas fueron admitidos como delegados de sindicatos. El congreso de Zurich de 1893 sólo admitió la representación de partidos y de las organizaciones «que reconociesen la necesidad de la organización obrera y de la acción política». El congreso de Londres de 1896 se negó a reconocer por esta razón las credenciales de los anarquistas" y votó condiciones de admisión para el congreso internacional siguiente que los excluían rigurosamente, aún como representantes de sindicatos.

SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM

The Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies decided yesterday, November 23, to reject the application of the anarchists for representation on the Executive Committee and on the Soviet of Workers' Deputies. The Executive Committee itself has given the following reasons for this decision: "(1) In the whole of international practice, congresses and socialist conferences have never included representatives of the anarchists, since they do not recognise the political struggle as a means for the achievement of their ideals; (2) only parties can be represented, and the anarchists are not a party."

We consider the decision of the Executive Committee to be in the highest degree correct, and of enormous importance from the point of view both of principle and of practical politics. If we were to regard the Soviet of Workers' Deputies as a workers' parliament or as an organ of proletarian self-government, then of course it would have been wrong to reject the application of the anarchists. However insignificant (fortunately) the influence of the anarchists among our workers may be, nevertheless, a certain number of workers undoubtedly support them. The question whether the anarchists constitute a party, an organisation, a group, or a voluntary association of like-minded people, is a formal question, and not of major importance in terms of principle. Lastly, if the anarchists, while rejecting the political struggle, apply for representation in an institution which is conducting such a struggle, this crying inconsistency merely goes to show once again how utterly unstable are the philosophy and tactics of the anarchists. But, of course, instability is no reason for excluding anyone from a "parliament", or an "organ of self-government".

We regard the decision of the Executive Committee as absolutely correct and in no way contradicting the functions, the character and the composition of this body. The Soviet of Workers' Deputies is not a labour parliament and not an organ of proletarian self-government, nor an organ of self-government at all, but a fighting organisation for the achievement of definite aims.

This fighting organisation includes, on the basis of a temporary, unwritten fighting agreement, representatives of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (the party of proletarian socialism), of the "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party (the representatives of petty-bourgeois socialism, or the extreme Left wing of revolutionary bourgeois democrats), and finally many "non-party" workers. The latter, however, are not non-party in general, but are non-party revolutionaries, their sympathies being entirely on the side of the revolution, for the victory of which they are fighting with boundless enthusiasm, energy and self-sacrifice. For that reason it will be quite natural to include representatives of the revolutionary peasantry in the Executive Committee.

For all practical purposes, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies is an inchoate, broad fighting alliance of socialists and revolutionary democrats, the term "non-party revolutionary", of course, representing a series of transitional stages between the former and the latter. Such an alliance is obviously necessary for the purpose of conducting political strikes and other, more active forms of struggle, for the urgent democratic demands which have been accepted and approved by the overwhelming majority of the population. In an alliance of this sort, the anarchists will not be an asset, but a liability; they will merely bring disorganisation and thus weaken the force of the joint assault; to them it is still "debatable" whether political reform is urgent and important. The exclusion of anarchists from the fighting alliance which is carrying out, as it were, our democratic revolution, is quite necessary from the point of view of this revolution and is in its interests. There can be a place in a fighting alliance only for those who fight for the aim of that alliance. If, for example, the "Cadets" or the "Party of Law and Order"[33] had managed to recruit at least several hundred workers into their St. Petersburg branches, the Executive Committee of the

Soviet of Workers' Deputies would hardly have opened its doors to the representatives of such organisations.

In explaining its decision, the Executive Committee refers to the practice of international socialist congresses. We warmly welcome this statement, this recognition by the executive body of the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies of the ideological leadership of the international Social-Democratic movement. The Russian revolution has already acquired international significance. The enemies of the revolution in Russia are already conspiring with Wilhelm II and with all sorts of reactionaries, tyrants, militarists and exploiters in Europe against free Russia. Neither shall we forget that the complete victory of our revolution demands an alliance of the revolutionary proletariat of Russia with the socialist workers of all countries.

It is not for nothing that international socialist congresses adopted the decision not to admit the anarchists. A wide gulf separates socialism from anarchism, and it is in vain that the *agents-provocateurs* of the secret police and the newspaper lackeys of reactionary governments pretend that this gulf does not exist. The philosophy of the anarchists is bourgeois philosophy turned inside out. Their individualistic theories and their individualistic ideal are the very opposite of socialism. Their views express, not the future of bourgeois society, which is striding with irresistible force towards the socialisation of labour, but the present and even the past of that society, the domination of blind chance over the scattered and isolated small producer. Their tactics, which amount to a repudiation of the political struggle, disunite the proletarians and convert them in fact into passive participators in one bourgeois policy or another, since it is impossible and unrealisable for the workers really to dissociate themselves from politics.

In the present Russian revolution, the task of rallying the forces of the proletariat, of organising it, of politically educating and training the working class, is more imperative than ever. The more outrageous the conduct of the Black-Hundred government, the more zealously its *agents-provocateurs* strive to fan base passions among the ignorant masses and the more desperately the defenders of the autocracy, which is rotting alive, clutch at every opportunity

to discredit the revolution by organising hold-ups, pogroms and assassinations, and by fuddling lumpen proletarians with drink, the more important is the task of organisation that falls primarily to the party of the socialist proletariat. And we shall therefore resort to every means of ideological struggle to keep the influence of the anarchists over the Russian workers just as negligible as it has been so far.

Written on November 24 (December 7), 1905

Published in *Novaya Zhizn*, No. 21, November 25, 1905
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the newspaper text

PARTIDO SOCIALISTA
Y REVOLUCIONARIOS SIN-PARTIDO [1]

El Soviet de San Petersburgo no era el único. En la mayor parte de los centros importantes de Rusia, en el curso de octubre y de noviembre, Soviets análogos de diputados obreros surgían espontáneamente: en Moscú, Rostov, Kiev, Odesa, Novorosiisk, e incluso en Krasnoiarsk y en Chita, en Siberia oriental.

Se veían al mismo tiempo, multiplicarse las asociaciones puramente corporativas, comisiones de fábricas y sindicatos obreros. Se contaban en San Petersburgo, en octubre-noviembre, 44 sindicatos que agrupaban a 35.000 obreros; en Moscú, 50 sindicatos con 25.000 miembros. El 6 de noviembre de 1905 se constituyó la "Oficina Central de los sindicatos obreros de Petersburgo".

Los Soviets eran órganos que dirigían toda la acción económica y política del proletariado, preparaban la insurrección y desempeñaban a veces el papel de "segundo gobierno". Agrupaban principalmente a los representantes de los obreros industriales más avanzados. Los sindicatos eran asociaciones formadas en el terreno económico y que se proponían fines limitados, pero que eran arrastrados por los acontecimientos a sobrepasar frecuentemente esos fines.

Unos y otros tenían desde luego un carácter común: eran neutros con respecto a los partidos; podían tener en su seno a miembros de unos u otros partidos, pero como organizaciones no se adherían al programa de ninguno de ellos. Se ha visto que la tentativa hecha por el partido socialdemócrata para obligar al Soviet de

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edición rusa, t. VII, primera parte, págs. 42-43.

San Petersburgo a adoptar su programa había fracasado. Los sindicatos, desde el 17 de septiembre de 1905, habían establecido el principio de su neutralidad con respecto a los partidos.

En estas condiciones, se planteaba un problema, el de la actitud de los diversos partidos frente a estas organizaciones "sin-partido". En la socialdemocracia este problema era ardientemente discutido. Lenin estimó necesario aclarar la cuestión en el artículo siguiente, aparecido en Novaia Jizn.

I

El movimiento revolucionario en Rusia, que conquista cada día a elementos nuevos de la población, suscita toda clase de grupos sin-partido. La necesidad de asociación se manifiesta con tanta mayor fuerza cuanto había estado durante mucho tiempo perseguida y reprimida. Estas organizaciones, de formas diversas y frecuentemente mal definidas, aparecen continuamente. Su carácter es muy original. No tienen cuadros rígidos, como las de Occidente. Los sindicatos obreros toman un carácter político. La lucha política se confunde con la lucha económica, por ejemplo, en las huelgas, creando formas heterogéneas de organizaciones pasajeras o más o menos durables (1).

¿Qué significa este fenómeno? ¿Cuál debe ser la actitud de la socialdemocracia con respecto a él?

Partidos estrictamente constituidos son un fenómeno que acompaña y que sigue a una lucha de clases ya bien desarrollada. Inversamente, una lucha de clases abierta

(1) Los sindicatos tomaban una parte activa en los movimientos políticos, en las huelgas políticas; así, el sindicato de los tipógrafos decidía boicotear a los editores e impresores que «no ignorasen sistemáticamente la Dirección de la prensa» (es decir, la censura), consolidando de esta manera, la libertad de la prensa... Además de los sindicatos, denominados literalmente «uniones» de tal o cual profesión, había, según los lugares, «comisiones de fábrica», «cajas de huelgas», etc. que desempeñaban un papel análogo y respondían al carácter enunciado por Lenin.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND NON-PARTY REVOLUTIONISM

I

The revolutionary movement in Russia, which is rapidly spreading to ever new sections of the population, is giving rise to a number of non-party organisations. The longer the urge for association has been suppressed and persecuted, the more forcibly it asserts itself. All sorts of organisations, frequently loose in form, and most original in character, are constantly springing up. They have no hard and fast boundaries, as have organisations in Europe. Trade unions assume a political character. The political struggle blends with the economic struggle—as, for instance, in the form of strikes—and this gives rise to temporary, or more or less permanent, organisations of a blended type.

What is the significance of this phenomenon, and what should be the attitude of Social-Democrats towards it?

Strict adherence to the party principle is the corollary and the result of a highly developed class struggle. And, vice versa, the interests of the open and widespread class struggle demand the development of the strict party principle. That is why the party of the class-conscious proletariat, the Social-Democratic Party, has always quite rightly combated the non-party idea, and has worked steadily to establish a closely-knit, socialist workers' party consistent in its principles. The more thoroughly the development of capitalism splits up the entire people into classes, accentuating the contradictions among them, the greater is the success of this work among the masses.

It is quite natural that the present revolution in Russia should have given rise, and should continue to give rise, to so many non-party organisations. This is a democratic revo-

lution, i.e., one which is bourgeois as regards its social and economic content. This revolution is overthrowing the autocratic semi-feudal system, extricating the bourgeois system from it, and thereby putting into effect the demands of all the classes of bourgeois society—in this sense being a revolution of the whole people. This, of course, does not mean that our revolution is not a class revolution; certainly not. But it is directed against classes and castes which have become or are becoming obsolete from the point of view of bourgeois society, which are alien to that society and hinder its development. And since the entire economic life of the country has already become bourgeois in all its main features, since the overwhelming majority of the population is in fact already living in bourgeois conditions of existence, the antirevolutionary elements are naturally extremely few in number, constituting truly a mere "handful" as compared with the "people". Hence the class nature of the bourgeois revolution inevitably reveals itself in the "popular", at first glance non-class, nature of the struggle of all classes of a bourgeois society against autocracy and feudalism.

The epoch of the bourgeois revolution in Russia, no less than in other countries, is distinguished by a relatively undeveloped state of the class contradictions peculiar to capitalist society. True, in Russia capitalism is more highly developed at the present time than it was in Germany in 1848, to say nothing of France in 1789; but there is no doubt about the fact that in Russia purely capitalist antagonisms are very very much overshadowed by the antagonisms between "culture" and Asiatic barbarism, Europeanism and Tartarism, capitalism and feudalism; in other words, the demands that are being put first today are those the satisfaction of which will develop capitalism, cleanse it of the slag of feudalism and improve the conditions of life and struggle both for the proletariat and for the bourgeoisie.

Indeed, if we examine the demands, instructions and *doléances*, which are now being drawn up in infinite numbers in every factory, office, regiment, police unit, parish, educational institution, etc., etc., all over Russia, we shall easily see that the overwhelming majority of them contain purely "cultural" demands, if we may call them so. What I mean is that actually they are not specifically class demands.

but demands for elementary rights, demands which will not destroy capitalism but, on the contrary, bring it within the framework of Europeanism, and free it of barbarism, savagery, corruption and other "Russian" survivals of serfdom. In essence, even the proletarian demands are limited, in most cases, to reforms of the sort that are fully realisable within the framework of capitalism. What the Russian proletariat is demanding now and immediately is not something that will undermine capitalism, but something that will cleanse it, something that will accelerate and intensify its development.

Naturally, as a result of the special position which the proletariat occupies in capitalist society, the striving of the workers towards socialism, and their alliance with the Socialist Party assert themselves with elemental force at the very earliest stages of the movement. But purely socialist demands are still a matter of the future: the immediate demands of the day are the democratic demands of the workers in the political sphere, and economic demands within the framework of capitalism in the economic sphere. Even the proletariat is making the revolution, as it were, within the limits of the minimum programme and not of the maximum programme. As for the peasantry, the vast and numerically overwhelming mass of the population, this goes without saying. Its "maximum programme", its ultimate aims, do not go beyond the bounds of capitalism, which would grow more extensively and luxuriantly if all the land were transferred to the whole of the peasantry and the whole of the people. Today the peasant revolution is a bourgeois revolution—however much these words may jar on the sentimental ears of the sentimental knights of our petty-bourgeois socialism.

The character of the revolution now in progress, as outlined above, quite naturally gives rise to non-party organisations. The whole movement, therefore, on the surface inevitably acquires a non-party stamp, a non-party appearance —but only on the surface, of course. The urge for a "human", civilised life, the urge to organise in defence of human dignity, for one's rights as man and citizen, takes hold of everyone, unites all classes, vastly outgrows all party bounds and shakes up people who as yet are very very far from being able to rise to party allegiance. The vital need of immediate,

elementary, essential rights and reforms puts off, as it were, all thought and consideration of anything further. Preoccupation with the struggle in progress, a preoccupation that is quite necessary and legitimate, for without it success in the struggle would be impossible, causes people to idealise these immediate, elementary aims, to depict them in rosy colours and sometimes even to clothe them in fantastic garb. Simple democracy, ordinary bourgeois democracy, is taken as socialism and "registered" as such. Everything seems to be "non-party"; everything seems to fuse into a single movement for "liberation" (actually, a movement liberating the whole of bourgeois society); everything acquires a faint, a very faint tint of "socialism", owing above all to the leading part played by the socialist proletariat in the democratic struggle.

In these circumstances, the idea of non-partisanship cannot but gain certain temporary successes. The slogan of non-partisanship cannot but become a fashionable slogan, for fashion drags helplessly at the tail of life, and it is the non-party organisation that appears to be the most "common" phenomenon on the surface of political life: non-party democratism, non-party strike-ism, non-party revolutionism.

The question now arises: what *should* be the attitude of the adherents and representatives of the various classes towards this fact of non-party organisation, towards this idea of non-partisanship? "Should", that is, not in the subjective sense, but objectively, i.e., not in the sense of what view to take of it, but in the sense of what attitude is inevitably taking shape under the influence of the respective interests and viewpoints of the various classes.

II

As we have already shown, the non-party principle is the product—or, if you will, the expression—of the bourgeois character of our revolution. The bourgeoisie cannot help inclining towards the non-party principle, for the absence of parties among those who are fighting for the liberation of bourgeois society implies that no fresh struggle will arise against this bourgeois society itself. Those who carry on a "non-party" struggle for liberty are not aware of the bourgeois nature of liberty, or they sanctify the bourgeois system, or

else they put off the struggle against it, its "perfecting", to the Greek calends. And, conversely, those who consciously or unconsciously stand for the bourgeois system cannot help feeling attracted by the idea of non-partisanship.

In a society based upon class divisions, the struggle between the hostile classes is bound, at a certain stage of its development, to become a political struggle. The most purposeful, most comprehensive and specific expression of the political struggle of classes is the struggle of parties. The non-party principle means indifference to the struggle of parties. But this indifference is not equivalent to neutrality, to abstention from the struggle, for in the class struggle there can be no neutrals; in capitalist society, it is impossible to "abstain" from taking part in the exchange of commodities or labour-power. And exchange inevitably gives rise to economic and then to political struggle. Hence, in practice, indifference to the struggle does not at all mean standing aloof from the struggle, abstaining from it, or being neutral. Indifference is tacit support of the strong, of those who rule. In Russia, those who were indifferent towards the autocracy prior to its fall during the October revolution tacitly supported the autocracy. In present-day Europe, those who are indifferent towards the rule of the bourgeoisie tacitly support the bourgeoisie. Those who are indifferent towards the idea that the struggle for liberty is of a bourgeois nature tacitly support the domination of the bourgeoisie in this struggle, in the free Russia now in the making. Political unconcern is political satiety. A well-fed man is "unconcerned with", "indifferent to", a crust of bread; a hungry man, however, will always take a "partisan" stand on the question of a crust of bread. A person's "unconcern and indifference" with regard to a crust of bread does not mean that he does not need bread, but that he is always sure of his bread, that he is never in want of bread and that he has firmly attached himself to the "party" of the well-fed. The non-party principle in bourgeois society is merely a hypocritical, disguised, passive expression of adherence to the party of the well-fed, of the rulers, of the exploiters.

The non-party idea is a bourgeois idea. The party idea is a socialist idea. This thesis, in general and as a whole is applicable to all bourgeois society. One must, of course,

be able to adapt this general truth to particular questions and particular cases; but to forget this truth at a time when the whole of bourgeois society is rising in revolt against feudalism and autocracy means in practice completely to renounce socialist criticism of bourgeois society.

The Russian revolution, despite the fact that it is still in the early stages of its development, has already provided no little material to confirm the general considerations here outlined. Only the Social-Democratic Party, the party of the class-conscious proletariat, has always insisted, and insists now, upon strict adherence to the party principle. Our liberals, who voice the views of the bourgeoisie, cannot bear the socialist party principle and will not hear of class struggle. One need but recall the recent speeches of Mr. Rodichev, who for the hundredth time repeated what has been said over and over again by *Osvobozhdeniye*[34] abroad, as well as by the innumerable vassal organs of Russian liberalism. Finally, the ideology of the intermediate class, the petty bourgeoisie, has found a clear expression in the views of the Russian "radicals" of various shades, from *Nasha Zhizn* and the "radical-democrats"[35] to the "Socialist-Revolutionaries". The latter have demonstrated their confusion of socialism with democracy most clearly over the agrarian question, particularly by their slogan of "socialisation" (of the land without socialising capital). It is likewise well known that being tolerant towards bourgeois radicalism, they are intolerant towards the Social-Democratic Party principle.

An analysis of just how the interests of the various classes are reflected in the programme and tactics of the Russian liberals and radicals of all shades is beyond our subject. We have touched upon this interesting question only in passing, and must now proceed to draw the practical political conclusions with regard to the attitude of our Party towards non-party organisations.

Is it permissible for socialists to participate in non-party organisations? If so, on what conditions? What tactics should be pursued in these organisations?

The answer to the first question cannot be an unconditional and categorical "no". It would be wrong to say that in no case and under no circumstances should Social-Democrats participate in non-party (i.e., more or less consciously or

unconsciously bourgeois) organisations. In the period of the democratic revolution, a refusal to participate in non-party organisations would in certain circumstances amount to a refusal to participate in the democratic revolution. But undoubtedly socialists should confine these "certain circumstances" to narrow limits, and should permit of such participation only on strictly defined, restrictive conditions. For while non-party organisations, as we have already said, arise as a result of the relatively undeveloped state of the class struggle, strict adherence to the party principle, on the other hand, is one of the factors that make the class struggle conscious, clear, definite, and principled.

To preserve the ideological and political independence of the party of the proletariat is the constant, immutable and absolute duty of socialists. Whoever fails to fulfil this duty ceases to be a socialist *in fact*, however sincere his "socialist" (in words) convictions may be. Socialists may participate in non-party organisations only by way of exception; and the very purpose, nature, conditions, etc., of this participation must be wholly subordinated to the fundamental task of preparing and organising the socialist proletariat for conscious leadership of the socialist revolution.

Circumstances may compel us to participate in non-party organisations, especially in the period of a democratic revolution, specifically a democratic revolution in which the proletariat plays an outstanding part. Such participation may prove essential, for example, for the purpose of preaching socialism to vaguely democratic audiences, or in the interests of a joint struggle of socialists and revolutionary democrats against the counter-revolution. In the first case, such participation will be a means of securing the acceptance of our ideas; in the second case, it will represent a fighting agreement for the achievement of definite revolutionary aims. In both cases, participation can only be temporary. In both cases, it is permissible only if the independence of the workers' party is fully safeguarded and if the party as a whole controls and guides its members and groups "delegated" to non-party unions or councils.

When the activities of our Party were conducted secretly, the exercise of such control and guidance presented extreme-

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

ly great, and sometimes almost insuperable difficulties. But now that the activities of our Party are becoming more and more open, this control and this guidance can and should be exercised on the largest scale, not only by the higher bodies of the Party, but also by the rank and file, by all the organised workers belonging to our Party. Reports on the activities of Social-Democrats in non-party unions and councils, lectures on the conditions and aims of such activities, resolutions of party organisations of all types about these activities, should become a regular practice in a workers' party. Only by such *real* participation of the Party as a whole, by participation in the *direction* of such activities, can we contrast in practice truly socialist work with general democratic work.

What tactics should we pursue in the non-party unions? First of all, we should use every opportunity to establish independent contacts and to propagate the whole of our socialist programme. Secondly, we should define the immediate political tasks of the day in terms of the fullest and most resolute accomplishment of the democratic revolution; we should put forward the political watchwords of the democratic revolution and advance a "programme" of those reforms which should be carried out by militant revolutionary democrats as distinct from haggling, liberal democrats.

Only if matters are arranged in this way will it be permissible and useful for members of our Party to participate in the non-party revolutionary organisations which are being set up one day by the workers, the next day by the peasants, the day after by the soldiers, etc. Only in that event shall we be in a position to fulfil the twofold task of a workers' party in a bourgeois revolution, namely, to carry the democratic revolution to completion and to extend and strengthen the forces of the socialist proletariat, which needs freedom in order to carry on a ruthless struggle for the overthrow of the rule of capital.

Novaya Zhizn, Nos. 22 and 27, November 26 and December 2, 1905
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the text in *Novaya Zhizn*

LA REVOLUCION RUSA
Y LOS DEBERES DEL PROLETARIADO (1)

A partir de la segunda mitad de noviembre la revolución había entrado en su fase decisiva.

El Imperio ardía de punta a punta; en el interior, los campesinos arrojaban de sus posesiones a sangre y fuego a los propietarios nobles y ocupaban sus tierras; en el ejército y en la flota las insurrecciones se sucedían, en Cronstadt, en Sebastópol, en Járkov y en otras partes; en las provincias fronterizas, en Polonia, en Finlandia, en el Cáucaso, las nacionalidades oprimidas sacudían el yugo ruso.

El 23 de noviembre el Soviet de San Petersburgo había invitado a los obreros y a toda la población pobre a retirar sus depósitos de las cajas de ahorro; el 1° de diciembre lanzaba, de concierto con todas las organizaciones revolucionarias, un manifiesto, llamado "financiero", que contenía en substancia el razonamiento siguiente: el gobierno está en vísperas de la quiebra; el desastre no puede ser evitado más que por su derrumbamiento; para esto el mejor medio es atacar a su base; por consiguiente negarse al pago de todos los impuestos y de las anualidades campesinas, reclamar el pago en oro de los salarios y sueldos, retirar las sumas depositadas en cualquier forma que sea.

El gobierno, por su parte, creyó llegado el momento de obrar. La élite obrera, que había participado en las huelgas de octubre y de noviembre, estaba ya fatigada; el grueso del ejército no había sostenido a los insurrectos; los campesinos estaban aislados, a la vez, de las ciudades y de la tropa; la "sociedad" liberal, asustada por la revolución, contenta ya por las concesiones hechas, se inclinaba del lado del poder, como lo había

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edición rusa, t. VII, primera parte, págs. 72-81.

demostrado los debates del último congreso de las municipalidades (6-13 de noviembre).

Entonces las provincias en que el movimiento agrario era más violento fueron declaradas en estado de sitio: la prensa fué sometida al arbitrio de los gobernadores (los periódicos que como Novaia Jizn, habían publicado el Manifiesto Financiero, fueron confiscados y suprimidos el mismo día); el delito de huelga en los servicios públicos fué castigado con cuatro años de prisión: en fin, el 3 de diciembre, el Comité ejecutivo del Soviet era detenido.

La respuesta fué la huelga general declarada el 8 de diciembre, que se extendió a 33 ciudades y a la mayor parte de las líneas ferroviarias. En algunos lugares, pero sobre todo en Moscú, se convirtió casi inmediatamente en insurrección, en guerra abierta entre el pueblo y el poder. El 10 de diciembre Moscú estaba cubierto de barricadas elevadas espontáneamente. El gobernador Dubasov hizo entrar en acción a la artillería, llamó tropas seguras: sin embargo, el combate duró hasta el 17. Finalmente, los insurrectos fueron aplastados. El proletariado de Petersburgo, fatigado, no les había sostenido activamente (1).

El 17 de diciembre, la insurrección era aplastada también en el Donetz, el 21 en Rostov, el 25, la "República de Novorossisk", donde el Soviet ocupaba el poder desde el 12, dejaba de existir. A fines de diciembre, las huelgas habían cesado en todas partes.

La derrota de la revolución era cierta. Para ganarse definitivamente a los liberales, el gobierno había publicado, el 11 de diciembre, al principio de la huelga, una nueva ley electoral que enmendaba en un sentido relativamente liberal la del 6 de agosto: al lado de los tres "grupos" de los propietarios agrarios, de los campesinos y de los habitantes de las ciudades, se creaba un "grupo obrero"; pero era sobre todo la pequeña y media burguesía de las ciudades la que veía crecer considerablemente (más que decuplicar, según ciertas evaluaciones) el número de sus electores. Haciendo concesiones con una mano a la burguesía y a los intelectuales, el gobierno podía, con la otra, pegar duramente a los obreros y a los campesinos revolucionarios: reco-

(1) Sobre la insurrección de Moscú, véase uno de los extractos siguientes.

rieron Rusia expediciones punitivas, las cuales, bajo el mando de verdugos calificados, llenaban las prisiones, fusilaban a los "agitadores", cerraban los sindicatos, saqueaban las imprentas, sostenían a las bandas negras en sus pogroms.

El 12 de febrero era fijada la apertura de la Duma para el 2 de abril; el 20 aparecía una ley que precisaba la organización del Parlamento: dos Cámaras, la Duma, reintegrada en sus funciones casi puramente consultivas, y el Consejo de Estado burocrático. A fin de mes comenzaba la campaña electoral.

Varias cuestiones se le planteaban a la socialdemocracia ante esta situación. Sus organizaciones, muy castigadas por las represiones, volanse obligadas a pasar a la ilegalidad completa. El restablecimiento de la unidad era sentido, sobre todo por los obreros, como una necesidad urgente: el Comité central de unión formado por las conferencias de noviembre se ocupaba de la convocatoria de un Congreso común; pero la cuestión de la conducta a seguir con respecto a la Duma separaba a las dos fracciones.

¿Cómo considerar la Duma, tal como salía del "ukase" del 11 de diciembre? Mencheviques y bolcheviques convenían, como dice Lenin, en que la Duma era "una miserable falsificación" de la representación popular, que era necesario combatir esa farsa y prepararse a la insurrección para llegar a la convocatoria de "una Constituyente elegida por todo el pueblo". Pero los primeros decían: el partido debe participar al menos en los dos primeros grados de las elecciones, pues, después de la derrota de diciembre la Duma será el centro que agrupará a todas las oposiciones y educará políticamente al pueblo; los bolcheviques habían decidido, en una conferencia celebrada en Tammersfors, en Finlandia, a mediados de diciembre, en plena insurrección de Moscú, no participar en ningún grado de las elecciones, pero entrar en las asambleas electorales, legalmente o no, para exponer el programa socialista.

Esta discusión sobre la Duma contribuyó a despertar a las organizaciones del partido y suscitó una nueva polémica: ¿cómo juzgar la situación, qué lecciones sacar de los acontecimientos para el porvenir? Mencheviques y bolcheviques estaban de acuerdo en que la revolución había sufrido una pausa, y en que recobraría su impulso. Sin embargo, los primeros sacaban del re-

ceso sufrido la conclusión de que era necesario tener más en cuenta a la oposición burguesa y volver a la preparación legal en los sindicatos subsistentes. Los bolcheviques formulaban la táctica a seguir como una continuación directa de la tentativa de diciembre.

El partido socialdemócrata, después de la supresión de Novaia Jizn y del diario menchevista Nachalo, el 2 de diciembre de 1905 se veía privado de todo órgano legal. Estaba, pues, reducido, fuera de dos revistas periódicas, a las hojas y a las publicaciones ilegales. Las Izvestia (Noticias del Partido), en donde apareció el artículo que damos a continuación, era una hoja ilegal e irregular redactada en común por los bolcheviques y los mencheviques para la preparación de las cuestiones al orden del día del congreso de unión. El número 1 había aparecido el 7 de febrero de 1906.

I

¿Cuál es la situación de la revolución democrática en Rusia? ¿Está aplastada, o bien atravesamos solamente un período de calma? ¿Ha sido la insurrección de diciembre el punto culminante de la revolución, y resbalamos desde este momento de un modo irresistible hacia un régimen constitucional a lo Chipov? (1) ¿O bien, el movimiento revolucionario en su conjunto, lejos de decrecer, continúa ascendiendo, preparando otra explosión, acumulando durante la calma fuerzas nuevas, que prometen, después de la primera insurrección desgraciada, una segunda insurrección con probabilidades de éxito infinitamente superiores?

Estas son las cuestiones cardinales que tienen que resolver los socialdemócratas de Rusia. Fieles al marxismo, no podemos ni debemos sustraernos por medio

(1) Chipov se había convertido en uno de los jefes de la *Liga del 17 de octubre*, que agrupaba a las organizaciones de los grandes propietarios y altos funcionarios que se mantenían estrictamente en el terreno del «ukase» del 17 de octubre.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT

I

What is the state of the democratic revolution in Russia? Is it defeated, or are we merely passing through a temporary lull? Was the December uprising the climax of the revolution, and are we now rushing headlong towards a "Shipov Constitution" regime[67]? Or is the revolutionary movement, on the whole, not subsiding, but rising, in preparation for a new outbreak, using the lull to muster new forces, and promising, after the first unsuccessful insurrection, a second, with much greater chances of success?

These are the fundamental questions that now confront the Social-Democrats in Russia. If we are to remain true to Marxism, we cannot and should not try, by resorting to generalities, to shirk the task of analysing the objective conditions; for, in the last analysis, the appraisal of these conditions provides the final answer to these questions. On this answer wholly depend the tactics of the Social-Democrats; and our disputes about boycotting the Duma, for example (which, incidentally, are drawing to a close, as the majority of the organisations of the R.S.D.L.P. have declared in favour of the boycott), are only a tiny particle of these big questions.

We have just said that it would be unbecoming for a Marxist to try to evade these questions by resorting to generalities. A sample of these generalities is the argument that we have never regarded the revolution merely as being one of "pikes and pitchforks"; that we were revolutionaries even when we did not call for immediate insurrection; that we will remain revolutionaries also in the parliamentary period

when it sets in, etc. Such arguments would be miserable evasions, replacing the concrete historical question by abstract considerations which explain absolutely nothing, and merely serve to cover up paucity of ideas, or political confusion. To support our statement with an example, we will refer to Marx's attitude to the German revolution in 1848. This may be all the more useful since in our country we see a number of symptoms of the same, and perhaps even more sharp, division among the bourgeoisie into a reactionary and a revolutionary section—a division that was absent in the Great French Revolution, for example. Strictly speaking, the fundamental questions about the state of the Russian revolution that we posed above can also be put in a form adapted to the analogy with Germany (in the relative and limited sense, of course, in which any historical analogies may be drawn). We can put it as follows: 1847 or 1849? Are we going through (like Germany in 1847, when the German State Duma, the so-called United Landtag, was being convened) the closing period of the climax of the revolution, or are we experiencing (as Germany did in 1849) the closing period of final exhaustion of the revolution, and the beginning of a humdrum life under a dock-tailed constitution?

Marx was putting this question all through 1850, was studying it and answered it at last, not by an evasion, but with a direct reply deduced from his analysis of the objective conditions. In 1849 the revolution was crushed, a number of insurrections ended unsuccessfully; the liberty actually won by the people was taken away from them, and reaction was raging against the "revolutionaries". Open political action by the Communist League (the Social-Democratic organisation of the time, virtually led by Marx) became impossible. "Everywhere the need arose," we read in the Address of the Central Committee to the members of the League in June 1850, "for a strong, *secret* (our italics) organisation of the revolutionary party throughout Germany." The Central Committee, which has its headquarters abroad, sends an emissary to Germany, who concentrates "all the available forces in the hands of the League". Marx writes (in the Address of March 1850) that a revival, a new revolution, is probable; he advises the workers to organise independently, and particularly urges the necessity of arming

the whole proletariat, of forming a proletarian guard, and of "frustrating by force any attempt at disarming". Marx calls for the formation of "revolutionary workers' governments", and discusses what the proletariat should do "during and after the coming insurrection". Marx points to Jacobin France of 1793 as the model for the German democrats (see *The Revelations About the Cologne Communist Trial*, Russ. transl., p. 115 and foll.).[68]

Six months pass. The expected revival does not come about. The efforts of the League fail. "In the course of the year 1850," wrote Engels in 1885, "the prospects of a new upswing of the revolution became more and more improbable, indeed impossible."[69] The industrial crisis of 1847 had been overcome. A period of industrial prosperity was setting in. And so Marx, reckoning with the objective conditions, raises the question sharply and definitely. In the autumn of 1850 he categorically declares that now, with the productive forces of bourgeois society developing so profusely, "*there can be no talk of a real revolution*".[70]

As the reader will see, Marx makes no attempt to dodge a difficult question. He does not play with the word revolution; he does not substitute empty abstractions for a burning political issue. He does not forget that the revolution, in general, is making progress in any case, because bourgeois society is developing; but he says straightforwardly that a democratic revolution in the direct and narrow sense of the term is impossible. He solves a difficult problem without reference to the "mood" of dejection and weariness prevailing among a particular section of the proletariat (as some Social-Democrats who have slipped into tail-ism often do). No, so long as he had no other facts to go by except that the mood was subsiding (in March 1850), he continued to call to arms and insurrection, to prepare for it, and not to depress the mood of the workers by personal scepticism and dismay. Not until he was absolutely convinced that the "exhaustion" of the "real revolution" was inevitable did he change his views. And having changed them, he openly and straightforwardly demanded a fundamental change of tactics and the complete cessation of preparations for insurrection: for such preparations could then only be playing at insurrection. The slogan of insurrection was definitely shelved. It was

openly and definitely admitted that "the form of the movement has changed".

We must always keep this example of Marx before us in the present difficult times. We must treat the possibility of a "real revolution" in the immediate future, the question of the main "form of the movement", the question of insurrection and of preparing for it, as seriously as possible; but a fighting political party must solve this problem straightforwardly and definitely, without equivocation, without evasion, and without any reservation. The party that failed to find a clear answer to this question would not deserve to be called a party.

II

And so, what objective facts have we to go by in solving this problem? There are a number of superficial and conspicuous facts that would seem to support the opinion that the directly revolutionary "form of the movement" is completely exhausted, that a new insurrection is impossible, and that Russia has entered the era of paltry bourgeois quasi-constitutionalism. That a turn has taken place among the bourgeoisie is beyond doubt. The landlords have deserted the Cadets and have joined the Union of October Seventeenth. The government has already granted a two-chamber "Constitution". Martial law, arrests and other punitive measures make possible the convening of a sham Duma. Insurrection in the towns has been suppressed, and the peasant movement in the spring may prove to be isolated and impotent. The landlords are selling out their estates, and that means that the bourgeois, "orderly" section of the peasantry is growing. That a mood of dejection prevails after the suppression of the insurrection is a fact. Lastly, it must not be forgotten that it is easier and cheaper, so to speak, to predict the defeat of revolution in general than to predict its revival; for at present power is on the side of reaction, and in "most cases", up to now, revolutions have finished unfinished.

What evidence is there that supports an opposite opinion? We will allow this question to be answered by K. Kautsky, whose sober views and ability calmly, practically and thoroughly to discuss topical and acute political problems are

known to all Marxists. Kautsky expressed his opinion soon after the suppression of the Moscow insurrection, in an article entitled "The Chances of the Russian Revolution". This article has appeared in Russian—of course, mutilated by the censor (in much the same way as was the Russian translation of another splendid essay by Kautsky, *The Agrarian Question in Russia*).

Kautsky does not attempt to dodge the difficult problem. He does not try to get rid of it by uttering empty phrases about the revolution in general being invincible, about the proletarian class being always and constantly revolutionary, etc. No, he bluntly puts the concrete historical question of the chances of the present democratic revolution in Russia, here and now. Without beating about the bush, he starts his article by stating that since the beginning of 1906 hardly any news other than sad has been received from Russia, which "*might give rise to the opinion that the revolution has been utterly suppressed and is at its last gasp*". It is not only the reactionaries that are exultant over this, but also the Russian liberals, writes Kautsky, showering on these heroes of the "coupon"[71] a string of contemptuous epithets that they fully deserve (evidently Kautsky has not yet been converted to Plekhanov's theory that Russian Social-Democrats should "value the support of the non-proletarian *opposition* parties").

And so Kautsky analyses in detail this naturally plausible opinion. That there is an outward resemblance between the defeat of the Moscow workers in December and the defeat of the Paris workers in June (1848) is beyond doubt. In both cases the armed uprising of the workers was "provoked" by the government at a time when the working class was not yet sufficiently organised. In both cases reaction triumphed despite the heroic resistance of the workers. What conclusion does Kautsky draw from this? Does he repeat Plekhanov's pedantic admonition that it was wrong to take up arms? No. He does not hasten to indulge in cheap and short-sighted moralising after the event. He *studies* the objective facts that can reply to the question whether the Russian revolution is completely crushed or not.

Kautsky sees four radical points of difference between the defeat of the proletariat in Paris in 1848 and the defeat of the

proletariat in Moscow in 1905. First, the defeat of Paris was the defeat of the whole of France. Nothing like this can be said about Moscow. The workers of St. Petersburg, Kiev, Odessa, Warsaw and Lodz are not defeated. They have been exhausted by the frightfully hard, twelve months' struggle; but their spirit has not been broken. They are gathering their strength to renew the struggle for freedom.

Secondly, an even more essential difference is that in France, in 1848, the peasants were on the side of reaction, whereas in Russia, in 1905, the peasants are on the side of the revolution. Peasant revolts are in progress. Whole armies are engaged in crushing these revolts. These armies are devastating the country as only Germany was devastated during the Thirty Years' War.[72] Military reprisals cow the peasants for a time; but they only aggravate their poverty and make their conditions more desperate. They, like the devastation caused during the Thirty Years' War, will inevitably rouse larger and larger masses who will be compelled to declare war on the existing system, who will prevent the restoration of peace in the country, and will join every insurrection.

The third and extremely important difference is the following. The way for the revolution of 1848 was paved by the crisis and famine of 1847. The reaction was strengthened by the termination of the crisis and a period of industrial prosperity. "The present reign of terror in Russia, however, must inevitably lead to an aggravation of the economic depression which has been weighing on the country for years." The full effects of the famine of 1905 will yet be felt within the next few months. The suppression of a revolution represents civil war on the very greatest scale, war against the whole people. This war is costing no less than a foreign war, and besides is devastating the home country, not some foreign land. Financial collapse is imminent. Moreover, the new trade agreements threaten particularly severe consequences for Russia, and may even give rise to a world economic crisis. Thus the longer the reign of reactionary terror lasts, the more desperate will become the economic position of the country and the more will anger against the hated regime grow. "Such a situation," says Kautsky, "will make any powerful movement against tsarism invin-

cible. And there will be no lack of such a movement. The Russian proletariat, which has already given so many great proofs of its heroism and devotion, will see to that."

The fourth difference that Kautsky points out is of particular interest for Russian Marxists. Nowadays, unfortunately, we hear a lot of inane, virtually and purely Cadet, snickering over "Brownings" and "fighting squads". No one has the courage and straightforwardness, of which Marx gave such an example, to say that insurrection is impossible, and that it is no use making further preparations for it. But people here are very fond of snickering over military operations by revolutionaries. They call themselves Marxists, but prefer to shirk the task of analysing the *military* aspect of insurrection (to which Marx and Engels always attached great importance[73]) by declaring with the inimitable majesty of a doctrinaire: "It was wrong to take up arms...." Kautsky behaves differently. Few as the facts about the insurrection at his disposal have been, he nevertheless tries to analyse the military aspect of the question as well. He tries to appraise the movement as a new form of struggle devised by the masses, unlike our revolutionary Kuropatkins,[74] who appraise a battle according to the rule: if they're giving something away, take it; if there's a fight on, run; if you're beaten, well, you shouldn't have taken up arms!

"Both the June fighting in Paris," says Kautsky, "and the December fighting in Moscow were barricade fighting. But the former was a disaster, it marked the end of the old barricade tactics. The latter marked the beginning of new barricade tactics. And consequently we must revise the opinion which Engels expressed in his "Introduction" to Marx's *Class Struggles*, that the period of barricade fighting is over for good.[75] Actually, only the period of the *old* barricade tactics is over. This is what the Moscow fighting showed, when a handful of insurgents managed to hold out for two weeks against superior forces armed with all the resources of modern artillery."

That is how Kautsky speaks. He does not sing a requiem for the insurrection because the first attempt failed. He does not grumble over the failure, but *studies* the birth and growth of a new and higher form of struggle, examines the significance of the disorder and discontent among the troops, the assistance the workers received from the townspeople, the combination of the mass strike with insurrection. He

studies the way in which the proletariat is *learning* the art of insurrection. He revises obsolete military theories, and thereby calls upon the whole Party to analyse and assimilate the experience of Moscow. He regards the whole movement as a transition from strike to insurrection, and tries to grasp how the workers should combine the two for the purpose of achieving success.

Kautsky concludes his article as follows: "Such are the lessons of Moscow. How far they will influence the forms of the struggle in future, it is impossible, as yet, to foresee from here [i.e., from Germany]. Indeed, in all preceding manifestations of the Russian revolution so far we have seen spontaneous outbreaks of the unorganised masses; none of these were planned or prepared beforehand. Probably this will continue to be the case for some time.

"But while it is impossible, as yet, definitely to predict the forms that the struggle will assume in the future, all the signs are that we must expect further battles, that the present ominous [*unheimliche*] stillness is merely the calm before the storm. The October movement made the masses in town and country conscious of their power. Then the reaction in January hurled them into an abyss of torment. Here everything inflames them, arouses their anger, and they are ready to pay any price, however high, to escape. Soon the masses will rise again and attack with mightier force than ever! Let the counter-revolution celebrate its triumph over the bodies of the heroes who fell in freedom's cause. The end of this triumph is approaching: the red dawn is rising, the *proletarian revolution* is at hand."

III

The question we have outlined is the fundamental question of Social-Democratic tactics as a whole. This is the first question that the coming Party congress will have to settle in the clearest and most unambiguous manner; and all members of the Party, all class-conscious workers should immediately do their utmost to collect the comprehensive material that will help to settle it, discuss it and send delegates to the congress who will be fully prepared for their important and responsible task.

The elections of delegates for the congress should take place on the basis of a clear distinction between tactical platforms. Strictly speaking, the consistent and complete reply that is given to this question, one way or the other, will settle all the minor details of Social-Democratic tactics.

Either—or.

Either we admit that at the present time "there can be no talk of a real revolution", in which case we must say so openly and emphatically, in the hearing of all, so as not to mislead either ourselves, or the proletariat, or the people. In that case, we must absolutely reject the task of completing the democratic revolution as the *immediate* task of the proletariat. In that case, we must completely shelve the question of insurrection and cease all work of arming and organising fighting squads; for it is unbecoming for the workers' party to play at insurrection. In that case, we must admit that the strength of revolutionary democrats is exhausted and make it our immediate business to support one or other section of the liberal democrats, as the real oppositional force under a constitutional regime. In that case, we must regard the State Duma as a parliament, even if a bad one, and not only participate in the elections, but also go into the Duma. In that case we must put the legalisation of the Party first, change the Party programme accordingly, and adjust all our work to the "legal" limits, or at any rate relegate underground work to a minor and subordinate place. In that case, we can regard the organisation of trade unions just as primary a Party task as armed uprising was in the preceding historical period. In that case, we should also shelve the revolutionary slogans of the peasant movement (such as confiscation of the landed estates), because these slogans are in practice slogans of insurrection, and to call for insurrection without previously preparing for it in military fashion, without believing in it, would be unworthy playing at insurrection. In that case, we must stop talking not only about a provisional revolutionary government, but also about so-called "revolutionary local self-government"; for experience has shown that bodies that are rightly or wrongly called by that name are actually transformed by the force of circumstances into organs of insurrection, into rudiments of a revolutionary government.

Or we admit that we can and must talk of a real revolution at the present time; we admit that new and higher forms of the open revolutionary struggle are inevitable, or at all events, most probable. In that case, the principal political task of the proletariat, the nerve centre of all its work, the soul of all its organised class activities, must be the task of *completing the democratic revolution*. In that case, all evasion of this task would merely mean degrading the concept of class struggle to Brentano's interpretation[76] of it: it would mean converting the proletariat into a hanger-on of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie. In that case, the Party's urgent and central political task is to prepare the forces of the proletariat, and to organise it, for armed uprising as the highest form of struggle achieved by the movement. In that case, it is our bounden duty critically to study the whole experience of the December uprising for the most direct practical purposes. In that case, we should increase tenfold our efforts to organise and arm fighting squads. In that case, we should prepare for insurrection also by means of fighting guerrilla operations, for it would be ridiculous to "prepare" only by enrolling and registering new recruits. In that case, we should regard civil war as having been declared and in progress, and the *whole* of the Party's activities should be guided by the rule: "In war as in war!". In that case, it is absolutely essential to train the cadres of the proletariat for *offensive* military operations. In that case, it is logical and consistent to issue revolutionary watchwords for the masses of the peasantry. The task of concluding fighting agreements with the revolutionary, and only the revolutionary, democrats comes into the foreground: the criterion for distinguishing between the various sections of the bourgeois democrats is the question of insurrection. With those who are in favour of insurrection the proletariat "strikes together", although it "marches separately"; those who are opposed to insurrection we ruthlessly fight, or spurn them as contemptible hypocrites and Jesuits (the Cadets). In that case, we put into the foreground of all our agitation the criticism and exposure of constitutional illusions from the standpoint of open civil war, and concentrate on circumstances and conditions that will steadily pave the way for spontaneous revolutionary outbreaks. In that case, we regard the Duma,

not as a parliament, but as a police headquarters, and reject all participation in the farcical elections because it can only corrupt and disorganise the proletariat. In that case, we take as the basis of organisation of the party of the working class (as Marx did in 1849) a "strong, secret organisation", which must have a separate apparatus for "public activities", and send its special feelers into all legal societies and institutions, from the workers' trade unions to the legal press.

To put it in a nutshell: either we must admit that the democratic revolution is at an end, shelve the question of insurrection and take the "constitutional" path. Or we recognise that the democratic revolution is still in progress, make it our primary task to complete it, develop and apply in practice the slogan of insurrection, proclaim civil war and ruthlessly denounce all constitutional illusions.

It is scarcely necessary to tell the reader that we are emphatically in favour of the *latter* solution of the problem that now confronts the Party. The purpose of the tactical platform published in this issue is to sum up and expound in systematic form the views that we shall uphold at the congress and in the course of our work in preparing for it. This platform should be regarded not as something complete, but as an outline explanation of tactical problems, and as a preliminary draft of the resolutions and decisions we shall advocate at the Party congress. This platform has been discussed at private gatherings of like-minded ex-"Bolsheviks" (including the editors of, and contributors to, *Proletary*) and is a product of collective effort.

Partiiniye Izvestia, No. 2,
March 20, 1906
Signed: *A Bolshevik*

Published according to
the text in *Partiiniye Izvestia*

EL BOICOT [1]

Desde el comienzo de los acontecimientos revolucionarios los obreros mencheviques y bolcheviques reclamaron enérgicamente la fusión de las organizaciones. En un principio la realizaron espontáneamente, bajo diversas formas, por la base; más tarde, los comités obreros se vieron obligados a seguir el movimiento: hubo "Comités federativos"; en fin, como resultado de las conferencias celebradas entre los directores, se creó un Comité central unificado y un órgano común, las Izvestia del Partido, y se decidió la convocatoria de un congreso general de unión.

El aumento de los efectivos del partido (en Moscú 5.300 miembros, 4.000 en Tiflis, 300 en Kinechma), la actividad de la mayoría de sus miembros, el mismo fin que se proponía el partido, exigían un cambio radical en los métodos hasta entonces empleados: el congreso debía representar verdaderamente al partido y decidir en todas las cuestiones conforme a su voluntad. Para esto los dos fracciones, una vez de acuerdo sobre el orden del día, elaboraron cada una sus proyectos de resoluciones. Lenin dirigió la redacción de la "plataforma" bolchevista. Estos proyectos debían ser discutidos en las asambleas generales de las organizaciones.

El acuerdo entre bolcheviques y mencheviques, en la práctica más aún que en la teoría, parecía restablecido. En la cuestión misma de la Duma, si los bolcheviques estaban por el boicot absoluto, los líderes mencheviques no se atrevían por su parte a llevar la participación hasta el último grado de las elecciones, es decir, hasta la elección de los diputados. Se dejó en libertad a las organizaciones. La mayor parte, incluso las que eran en su mayoría mencheviques, se pronunciaron por el boicot; bajo el régimen de represión y de estado de sitio que existía entonces, en ausencia de toda libertad de agitación, en frente de

1) Obras completas, segunda edición rusa, t. X, págs. 26-32.

partido cadete cuya actitud contribuía a crear en el pueblo la ilusión de un régimen constitucional, ésta parecía ser la única solución revolucionaria. Únicamente en Georgia, donde el movimiento campesino había derribado de hecho a las autoridades zaristas, la participación en las elecciones tuvo lugar hasta el fin, y varios diputados socialdemócratas (mencheviques) fueron enviados a la Duma.

Entre tanto, la campaña electoral tocaba a su fin y los cadetes obtenían victoria tras victoria. Como el partido socialista-revolucionario había también adoptado la táctica del boicot, los cadetes reunían en torno a sus candidatos la mayoría de los votos de oposición; el resto iba a los radicales "sin-partido" que se llamaban el "grupo del trabajo".

Cuando fué conocido este resultado, muchos, entre los mencheviques en primer lugar, hicieron responsable de ello al boicot. El congreso de unión, reunido, por fin, en Estocolmo, en abril de 1906, adoptó con algunas enmiendas una resolución, presentada por los mencheviques, que prevela la utilización revolucionaria de los conflictos probables entre la Duma y el gobierno y declaraba "deseable" la formación en la Duma de un "grupo socialdemócrata que, obrando constantemente bajo la dirección y la vigilancia de las autoridades centrales del partido, emularía mediante su crítica a todos los partidos burgueses a una oposición más decidida". En conclusión, "en todos aquellos sitios en que las elecciones no se han verificado todavía y en que el partido socialdemócrata puede presentar candidatos sin hacer bloque con los otros partidos, debe tratar de hacer entrar sus candidatos en la Duma". Este último párrafo, adoptado a propuesta de los delegados del Cáucaso, obtuvo los votos de muchos bolcheviques, entre otros el de Lenin.

Prácticamente, el Congreso inauguraba de esta manera una nueva táctica. Lenin, sin asociarse a los discursos de los mencheviques que hablaban del "error del boicot en el pasado, estima llegado el momento de cambiar de vía en el porvenir, de participar en las elecciones y en la lucha parlamentaria.

La primera Duma se reunió el 27 de abril. Lenin, día por día, se interesa por sus debates, por la evolución de los partidos y de las clases; desde Kuokkala, en Finlandia, donde se ha refugiado a fines de mayo

para escapar a las persecuciones, publica el resultado de sus análisis en los órganos efímeros: Volna (La Ola), Vperiod (Adelante), El Eco, publicados sucesivamente por la fraccion bolchevista—renaciente a pesar del congreso de "unión"—y sucesivamente suspendidos por la policía. En tanto que los mencheviques y el Comité central del partido, en el cual tienen la mayoría, consideran a la Duma como un bloque que hay que oponer a la burocracia y sostenerla contra esta última, los bolcheviques muestran que los obreros no tienen por qué sostener a una asamblea dirigida por los cadetes; la única conducta que debe observarse es seguir el proceso por el cual la pequeña burguesía urbana, y sobre todo la rural, personificada por el "grupo del trabajo" (Trudoviki) se destaca poco a poco de la influencia contrarrevolucionaria del liberalismo burgués representado por los cadetes.

La división entre los cadetes y los laboristas debía, naturalmente, ponerse de manifiesto sobre todo en la cuestión agraria. Cuando el ministerio Goremykin (sucesor de Witte) declaró, el 20 de junio, que era categóricamente contrario a los procedimientos indicados por la Duma en su respuesta al discurso de la corona para resolver esta cuestión, los cadetes elaboraron un llamamiento al pueblo en el cual declaraban que la Duma no renunciaba a sus proyectos agrarios, e invitaban a la población a esperar con calma el fin de sus trabajos: el 6 de julio, el llamamiento era adoptado sólo por 124 votos, contra 53 de la derecha y de los socialdemócratas y 101 abstenciones de los laboristas.

Este llamamiento y los debates a que dió lugar suministraron al gobierno la ocasión buscada para disolver la Duma (noche del 8 al 9 de julio). En señal de protesta, 180 diputados, después de muchas vacilaciones, se trasladaron a Viborg, en Finlandia, y desde allí lanzaron un manifiesto prohibiendo la recaudación de los impuestos y el reclutamiento de los soldados y declarando nulos todos los empréstitos que fuesen contraídos por el gobierno sin la Duma. Los socialdemócratas y los laboristas eran partidarios de medidas más enérgicas; el Comité central socialdemócrata, bajo la presión del Comité de Petersburgo, conquistado por los bolcheviques; los laboristas, los socialistas-revolucionarios, las tres Ligas de los campesinos, de los [illegible]

reptarios y de los maestros de escuela firmaron conjuntamente los llamamientos ¡Al ejército y a la flota! y ¡A todos los campesinos de Rusia!, en los que declaraban al gobierno ilegal desde aquel momento, invitaban a los campesinos a elegir comités para tomar posesión de las tierras y a los soldados a negarse a disparar contra sus hermanos.

Este era, ya realizado, el bloque de las izquierdas, que Lenin preconiza en el artículo siguiente: el gran objetivo era entonces, como lo explica en su folleto La disolución de la Duma y los objetivos del proletariado, *reunir en una sola y potente corriente revolucionaria la huelga general del proletariado, los alzamientos de los campesinos y los motines de los soldados. Los mencheviques, por el contrario, habían imaginado la consigna: "por la Duma como órgano de convocatoria de la Constituyente", y tendían hacia un acuerdo electoral con los cadetes. Así el desacuerdo entre las dos tendencias era patente.*

El Proletario, en cuyo primer número ha sido publicado este artículo, era el órgano ilegal fundado por los comités de Petersburgo y de Moscú precisamente para agrupar a los comités bolcheviques frente al Comité central, menchevista en su mayoría.

∴

Los socialdemócratas de izquierda deben revisar la cuestión del boicot de la Duma. Conviene recordar que hemos planteado siempre esta cuestión en un terreno concreto, con respecto a una situación política dada. Así, *El Proletario* (de Ginebra) (1) escribía ya que sería ridículo "renunciar" de antemano a utilizar incluso la Duma de Bulliguin (2) si pudiese nacer. En lo que concierne a la Duma de Witte, leemos en el folleto *La socialdemocracia y la Duma* (N. Lenin y

(1) «El Proletario», órgano central del Partido socialdemócrata obrero ruso, aparecía en Ginebra, bajo la dirección de Lenin, y se publicó desde el 27 (14) de mayo hasta el 25 (12) de noviembre de 1905. Cesó en su publicación a consecuencia de haberse trasladado a Rusia Lenin y varios colaboradores importantes.

(2) Véase más arriba el extracto intitulado *El boicot de la Duma Bulliguin y la insurrección.*

THE BOYCOTT

The Left-wing Social-Democrats must reconsider the question of boycotting the State Duma. It should be borne in mind that we have always presented this question concretely, and in connection with a definite political situation. For instance, *Proletary* (Geneva)[59] wrote that "it would be ridiculous to renounce utilising even the Bulygin Duma"*—if it could come into being. And in referring to the Witte Duma in the pamphlet *Social-Democracy and the State Duma* (by N. Lenin and F. Dan), N. Lenin wrote: "We must by all means carefully reconsider the question of tactics.... The situation has changed" at the time of the Bulygin Duma (see p. 2 of the pamphlet cited).**

The principal difference between revolutionary Social-Democracy and opportunist Social-Democracy on the question of boycott is as follows: the opportunists in all circumstances confine themselves to applying the stereotyped method copied from a specific period in the history of German socialism. We must utilise representative institutions; the Duma is a representative institution; therefore boycott is anarchism, and we must go into the Duma. All the arguments used by our Mensheviks, and especially by Plekhanov, on this topic, could be reduced to this childishly simple syllogism. The Menshevik resolution on the importance of representative institutions in a revolutionary period (see *Partiiniye Izvestia*,[60] No. 2) strikingly reveals the stereotyped and anti-historical nature of their argument.

---

* See present edition, Vol. 9, p. 182.—*Ed.*
** Ibid., Vol. 10, pp. 104-05.—*Ed.*

The revolutionary Social-Democrats, on the contrary, lay chief emphasis on the necessity of carefully appraising the concrete political situation. It is impossible to cope with the tasks of the revolutionary epoch in Russia by copying in a biased manner one of the recent German stereotyped patterns, forgetting the lessons of 1847-48. The progress of our revolution will be altogether incomprehensible if we confine ourselves to making bare contrasts between "anarchist" boycott and Social-Democratic participation in elections. Learn from the history of the Russian revolution, gentlemen!

This history has *proved* that the tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma were the only correct tactics at that time, and were entirely justified by events. Whoever forgets this and argues about boycott without taking the lessons of the Bulygin Duma into account (as the Mensheviks always do) is certifying his own mental poverty, his inability to explain and take into account one of the most important and eventful periods of the Russian revolution. The tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma were based on a correct appraisal of the temper of the revolutionary proletariat and of the objective features of the situation, which made an immediate general outbreak inevitable.

Let us pass to the *second* lesson of history—to the Witte, Cadet Duma. Nowadays we often hear Social-Democratic intellectuals making repentant speeches about the boycott of that Duma. The fact that it did assemble and undoubtedly rendered indirect service to the revolution is considered to be sufficient reason for penitently confessing that the boycott of the Witte Duma had been a mistake.

Such a view, however, is extremely biased and shortsighted. It fails to take into consideration a number of very important facts of the period prior to the Witte Duma, the period of its existence and the period after its dissolution. Remember that the electoral law for that Duma was promulgated on December 11,[61] at a time when the insurgents were waging an armed fight for a constituent assembly. Remember that *even the Menshevik* "*Nachalo*" wrote at the time: "The proletariat will *also* sweep away the Witte Duma, just as it swept away the Bulygin Duma." Under such circumstances the proletariat could not and should not have

surrendered to the tsar without a fight the power to convene the first representative assembly in Russia. The proletariat had to fight against the autocracy being strengthened by a loan on the security of the Witte Duma. The proletariat had to combat the constitutional illusions which, in the spring of 1906, formed the *entire* basis of the election campaign of the Cadets and the elections among the peasantry. At that time, when the importance of the Duma was being immeasurably exaggerated, the only means of combating such illusions was the boycott. The degree to which the *spread* of constitutional illusions was connected with participation in the election campaign and in the elections in the spring of 1906 is strikingly revealed by the attitude adopted by our Mensheviks. Suffice it to recall that, in spite of the warnings of the Bolsheviks, in the resolution of the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party the Duma was referred to as a "*power*"! Another instance: with complete self-assurance, Plekhanov wrote: "The government will *fall* into the abyss when it dissolves the Duma." In reply to him it was said at that time: we must prepare to *push* the enemy into the abyss and not, like the Cadets, place hopes on its "falling" into the abyss by itself. And how soon the words then uttered were proved correct!*

It was the duty of the proletariat to exert every effort to preserve the independence of its tactics in our revolution, namely: together with the politically conscious peasantry against the vacillating and treacherous liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie. But it was *impossible* to employ these tactics during the elections to the Witte Duma owing to a number of circumstances, both objective and subjective, which, in the vast majority of localities in Russia, would have made participation in the elections tantamount to the workers' party tacitly supporting the Cadets. The proletariat could not and should not have adopted half-hearted and artificially concocted tactics, prompted by "cunning" and confusion, of elections for an unknown purpose, of elections to the Duma, but not for the Duma. And yet it is a historical fact, which cannot be abolished by the silence, subterfuges and evasions of the Mensheviks, that *not one*

* See present edition, Vol. 10, p. 476.—*Ed.*

of them, not even Plekhanov, *dared* advocate in the press that we should go into the Duma. It is a fact that *not a single* call was issued in the press to go into the Duma. It is a fact that the Mensheviks themselves, in the leaflet issued by the Joint Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., officially recognised the boycott and confined the dispute *only* to the question of the stage at which the boycott was to be adopted. It is a fact that the Mensheviks laid emphasis, not on the elections *to the Duma*, but on the elections *as such*, and even on the process of electing as a means of organising *for* an uprising and *for* sweeping away the Duma. Events proved, however, that it was impossible to carry on mass agitation during the elections, and that the Duma alone provided certain opportunities for carrying on agitation among the masses.

Whoever really makes an effort to consider and weigh all these complicated facts, both objective and subjective, will see that the Caucasus was only an exception which proved the general rule. He will see that contrite speeches and explaining away the boycott as a piece of "youthful impetuousness" reveal an extremely narrow, superficial and short-sighted estimate of events.

The dissolution of the Duma has now clearly demonstrated that in the conditions prevailing in the spring of 1906 the boycott, on the whole, was the right tactics and advantageous. Under the conditions which *then* prevailed, *only* by means of the boycott could the Social-Democrats fulfil their duty of giving the people the necessary warning against the tsar's constitution and supplying the necessary criticism of the chicanery of the Cadets during the elections; and both (warning and criticism) were strikingly confirmed by the dissolution of the Duma.

Here is a small instance to illustrate the above. In the spring of 1906, Mr. Vodovozov, who is half-Cadet and half-Menshevik, was whole-heartedly in favour of participating in the elections and supporting the Cadets. Yesterday (August 11) he wrote in *Tovarishch*[62] that the Cadets "wanted to be a parliamentary party in a country that has no parliament and a constitutional party in a country that has no constitution"; that "the whole character of the Cadet Party has been determined by the fundamental contradiction be-

tween a radical programme and quite non-radical tactics".

The Bolsheviks could not desire a greater triumph than this admission on the part of a Left Cadet or Right-wing Plekhanovite.

However, while absolutely rejecting faint-hearted and short-sighted speeches of repentance, as well as the silly explanation of the boycott as "youthful impetuousness", we do not by any means reject the *new* lessons of the Cadet Duma. It would be pedantic obstinacy to be afraid of frankly admitting these new lessons and taking them into account. History has shown that when the Duma assembles opportunities arise for carrying on useful agitation both from within the Duma and around it; that the tactics of joining forces with the revolutionary peasantry against the Cadets can be applied in the Duma. This may seem paradoxical, but such, undoubtedly, is the irony of history: it was the Cadet Duma that clearly demonstrated to the masses the correctness of what we might briefly describe as "anti-Cadet" tactics. History has ruthlessly confuted all constitutional illusions and all "faith in the Duma"; but history has undoubtedly proved that that institution is of some, although modest, use to the revolution as a platform for agitation, for exposing the true "inner nature" of the political parties, etc.

Hence the conclusion: it would be ridiculous to shut our eyes to realities. The time has now come when the revolutionary Social-Democrats must cease to be boycottists. We shall not refuse to go into the Second Duma when (or "if") it is convened. We shall not refuse to utilise this arena, but we shall not exaggerate its modest importance; on the contrary, guided by the experience already provided by history, we shall entirely subordinate the struggle we wage in the Duma to another form of struggle, namely, strikes, uprisings, etc. We shall convene the Fifth Party Congress; there we shall resolve that *in the event of elections taking place*, it will be necessary to enter into an electoral agreement, for a few weeks, with the Trudoviks (unless the Fifth Party Congress is convened it will be impossible to conduct a united election campaign; and "blocs with other parties" are absolutely prohibited by the decision of the Fourth Congress). And then we shall utterly rout the Cadets.

This conclusion, however, does not by any means reveal the whole complexity of the task that confronts us. We deliberately emphasised the words "*in the event of* elections taking place", etc. We do not know yet whether the Second Duma will be convened, when the elections will take place, what the electoral laws will be like, or what the situation will be at that time. Hence our conclusion suffers from being extremely general: we need it to enable us to sum up past experience, to take note of the lessons of the past, to put the forthcoming questions of tactics on a proper basis; but it is totally inadequate for solving the concrete problems of immediate tactics.

Only Cadets and the "Cadet-like" people of all sorts can be satisfied with such a conclusion at the present time, can create a "slogan" for themselves out of the yearnings for a new Duma and try to persuade the government of the desirability of convening it as quickly as possible, etc. Only conscious or unconscious traitors to the revolution would *at the present time* exert all efforts to divert the inevitable new rise of temper and excitement into the channel of an election and not into that of a fight waged by means of a general strike and uprising.

This brings us to the crux of the question of present-day Social-Democratic tactics. The issue now is not whether we should take part in the elections. To say "yes" or "no" in this case means saying nothing at all about the fundamental problem of the moment. Outwardly, the political situation in August 1906 is similar to that in August 1905, but enormous progress has been made during this period: the forces that are fighting on the respective sides, the forms of the struggle, and the time required for carrying out this or that strategic move—if we may so express it—have all become more exactly defined.

The government's plan is clear. It was absolutely right in its calculations when it fixed the date of the convocation of the Duma and did not fix—*contrary to the law*—the date of the elections. The government does not want to tie its hands or show its cards. Firstly, it is gaining time in which to consider an amendment of the electoral law. Secondly—and this is the most important—it is keeping the date of the elections in reserve until the character and intensity of

the new rise of temper can be fully gauged. The government wishes to fix the date of the elections at the particular time (and perhaps in the particular form, i.e., the form of elections) when it *can split and paralyse the incipient uprising*. The government's reasoning is correct: if things remain quiet, perhaps we shall not convene the Duma at all, or revert to the Bulygin laws. If, however, a strong movement arises, then we can try to split it by fixing a date for the elections for the time being and in this way entice certain cowards and simpletons away from the direct revolutionary struggle.

Liberal blockheads (see *Tovarishch* and *Rech*) so utterly fail to understand the situation that they are of their own accord crawling into the net set by the government. They are trying with might and main "to prove" the need for the Duma and the *desirability* of diverting the rising tide into the channel of an election. But even they cannot deny that the question of what form the impending struggle will assume is still an open one. Today's issue of *Rech* (August 12) admits: "What the peasants will say in the autumn ... is still unknown." ... "It will be difficult to make any general forecasts until September-October, when the temper of the peasantry is definitely revealed."

The liberal bourgeois remain true to their nature. They do not want to assist actively in choosing the form of the struggle and in moulding the temper of the peasants one way or another, nor are they capable of doing so. The interests of the bourgeoisie demand that the old regime be not overthrown, but merely weakened, and that a liberal Cabinet be formed.

The interests of the proletariat demand the complete overthrow of the old, tsarist regime and the convocation of a constituent assembly with full power. Its interests demand the most active intervention in moulding the temper of the peasants, in choosing the most resolute forms of struggle as well as the best moment for it. On no account must we withdraw, or obscure, the slogan: convocation of a constituent assembly by revolutionary means, i.e., through the medium of a provisional revolutionary government. We must concentrate all efforts on explaining the conditions for an uprising: that it must be combined with the strike movement;

that all the revolutionary forces must be rallied and prepared for it, etc. We must resolutely take the path that was indicated in the well-known manifestoes: "To the Army and Navy" and "To All the Peasants", which were signed by the "bloc" of all revolutionary organisations, including the Trudovik Group. Lastly, we must take special care that the government does not under any circumstances succeed in splitting, stopping, or weakening the incipient uprising by ordering elections. In this respect the lessons of the Cadet Duma must be absolutely binding for us, viz., the lessons that the Duma campaign is a subordinate and secondary form of struggle, and that, owing to the objective conditions of the moment, direct revolutionary actions by the broad mass of the people still remain the principal form of struggle.

Of course, subordinating the Duma campaign to the main struggle, assigning a secondary role to this campaign for the contingency of an unfavourable outcome of the battle, or postponing the battle until experience of the Second Duma is obtained—such tactics may, if you like, be described as the old boycott tactics. On formal grounds this description might be justified, because, apart from the work of agitation and propaganda, which is always obligatory, "preparation for elections" consists of minute technical arrangements, which can very rarely be made a long time before the elections. We do not want to argue about words; in substance these tactics are the logical *development* of the old tactics, but not a *repetition* of them; they are a deduction drawn from the last boycott, but not the last boycott itself.

To sum up. We must take into account the experience of the Cadet Duma and spread its lessons among the masses. We must prove to them that the Duma is "useless", that a constituent assembly is essential, that the Cadets are wavering; we must demand that the Trudoviks throw off the yoke of the Cadets, and we must support the former against the latter. We must recognise at once the need for an electoral agreement between the Social-Democrats and the Trudoviks in the event of new elections taking place. We must exert all our efforts to counteract the government's plan to split the uprising by ordering elections. Advocating their tried revolutionary slogans with greater energy than ever, Social-

Democrats must exert every effort to unite all the revolutionary elements and classes more closely, to convert the upsurge that is probable in the near future into an armed uprising of the whole people against the tsarist government.

Written August 12 (25), 1906
Published August 21, 1906
in *Proletary*, No. 1

Published according to
the *Proletary* text

LAS ENSEÑANZAS DE LA INSURRECCION DE MOSCU [1]

En el verano de 1906, los mencheviki publicaron una recopilación, sin nombre de autor, intitulada Moscú en diciembre de 1905, *en la cual se narraba, día por día, la historia de la huelga general y de la insurrección. Diferentes capítulos estaban consagrados al papel de las organizaciones revolucionarias, a las operaciones de los equipos, a la conducta de las tropas y de la policía, a la actitud de la población, etc. Esta recopilación, compuesta a base de los documentos de los partidos, los testimonios de los que habían participado en el movimiento y las noticias de los periódicos, que aparecía apenas un semestre después de los acontecimientos, tenía una importancia considerable desde el punto de vista de las conclusiones a sacar para la táctica futura de los revolucionarios.*

Pero la tendencia general de la obra era disminuir el papel de la masa popular en el movimiento a fin de presentar a toda la insurrección solamente como la obra de algunos equipos de combate. El proletariado, que obraba sólo por objetivos que no le interesaban más que a él, que tenía a su lado la simpatía solamente pasiva de la población, no podía ser sostenido por el ejército y, por consecuencia, en estas condiciones, "querer transformar la huelga general en insurrección" era un error que debía conducir necesariamente a un fracaso. Tal era la conclusión general de los autores.

Lenin, en el artículo siguiente, se sirve de los hechos numerosos contenidos en la recopilación para sacar lecciones prácticas precisamente opuestas a las conclusiones de sus autores. La crítica de éstas la hizo en un segundo artículo intitulado "¡Abajo las manos!" aparecido en el número siguiente de El Proletario.

(1) *Obras completas*, segunda edición rusa, t. X, págs. 48-53.

LESSONS OF THE MOSCOW UPRISING

The publication of the book *Moscow in December 1905* (Moscow, 1906) could not have been more timely. It is an urgent task of the workers' party to assimilate the lessons of the December uprising. Unfortunately, this book is like a barrel of honey spoilt by a spoonful of tar: most interesting material—despite its incompleteness—and incredibly slovenly, incredibly trite conclusions. We shall deal with these conclusions on another occasion*; at present we shall turn our attention to the burning political question of the day, to the lessons of the Moscow uprising.

The principal forms of the December movement in Moscow were the peaceful strike and demonstrations, and these were the only forms of struggle in which the vast majority of the workers took an active part. Yet, the December action in Moscow vividly demonstrated that the general strike, as an independent and predominant form of struggle, is out of date, that the movement is breaking out of these narrow bounds with elemental and irresistible force and giving rise to the highest form of struggle—an uprising.

In calling the strike, all the revolutionary parties, all the Moscow unions recognised and even intuitively felt that it must inevitably grow into an uprising. On December 6 the Soviet of Workers' Deputies resolved to "strive to transform the strike into an armed uprising". As a matter of fact, however, none of the organisations were prepared for this. Even the Joint Council of Volunteer Fighting Squads[77] spoke (*on December 9!*) of an uprising as of something remote and it is quite evident that it had no hand in or control of

* See pp. 189-93 of this volume.—*Ed.*

the street fighting that took place. The organisations *failed to keep pace* with the growth and range of the movement.

The strike was growing into an uprising, primarily as a result of the pressure of the objective conditions created after October. A general strike could no longer take the government unawares: it had already organised the forces of counter-revolution, and they were ready for military action. The whole course of the Russian revolution after October, and the sequence of events in Moscow in the December days, strikingly confirmed one of Marx's profound propositions: revolution progresses by giving rise to a strong and united counter-revolution, i.e., it compels the enemy to resort to more and more extreme measures of defence and in this way devises ever more powerful means of attack.[78]

December 7 and 8: a peaceful strike, peaceful mass demonstrations. Evening of the 8th: the siege of the Aquarium.[79] The morning of the 9th: the crowd in Strastnaya Square is attacked by the dragoons. Evening: the Fiedler building[80] is raided. Temper rises. The unorganised street crowds, quite spontaneously and hesitatingly, set up the first barricades.

The 10th: artillery fire is opened on the barricades and the crowds in the streets. Barricades are set up more deliberately, and no longer in isolated cases, but on a really mass scale. The whole population is in the streets; all the main centres of the city are covered by a network of barricades. For several days the volunteer fighting units wage a stubborn guerrilla battle against the troops, which exhausts the troops and compels Dubasov[81] to beg for reinforcements. Only on December 15 did the superiority of the government forces become complete, and on December 17 the Semyonovsky Regiment[82] crushed Presnya District, the last stronghold of the uprising.

From a strike and demonstrations to isolated barricades. From isolated barricades to the mass erection of barricades and street fighting against the troops. Over the heads of the organisations, the mass proletarian struggle developed from a strike to an uprising. This is the greatest historic gain the Russian revolution achieved in December 1905; and like all preceding gains it was purchased at the price of enormous sacrifices. The movement was raised from a

general political strike to a higher stage. It compelled the reaction to go *to the limit* in its resistance, and so brought vastly nearer the moment when the revolution will also go to the limit in applying the means of attack. The reaction *cannot* go further than the shelling of barricades, buildings and crowds. But the revolution can go very much further than the Moscow volunteer fighting units, it can go very, very much further in breadth and depth. And the revolution has advanced far since December. The base of the revolutionary crisis has become immeasurably broader—the blade must now be sharpened to a keener edge.

The proletariat sensed sooner than its leaders the change in the objective conditions of the struggle and the need for a transition from the strike to an uprising. As is always the case, practice marched ahead of theory. A peaceful strike and demonstrations immediately ceased to satisfy the workers; they asked: What is to be done next? And they demanded more resolute action. The instructions to set up barricades reached the districts exceedingly late, when barricades were already being erected in the centre of the city. The workers set to work in large numbers, but *even this did not satisfy them*; they wanted to know: what is to be done next?—they demanded active measures. In December, we, the leaders of the Social-Democratic proletariat, were like a commander-in-chief who has deployed his troops in such an absurd way that most of them took no active part in the battle. The masses of the workers demanded, but failed to receive, instructions for resolute mass action.

Thus, nothing could be more short-sighted than Plekhanov's view, seized upon by all the opportunists, that the strike was untimely and should not have been started, and that "they should not have taken to arms". On the contrary, we should have taken to arms more resolutely, energetically and aggressively; we should have explained to the masses that it was impossible to confine things to a peaceful strike and that a fearless and relentless armed fight was necessary. And now we must at last openly and publicly admit that political strikes are inadequate; we must carry on the widest agitation among the masses in favour of an armed uprising and make no attempt to obscure this question by talk about

"preliminary stages", or to befog it in any way. We would be deceiving both ourselves and the people if we concealed from the masses the necessity of a desperate, bloody war of extermination, as the immediate task of the coming revolutionary action.

Such is the first lesson of the December events. Another lesson concerns the character of the uprising, the methods by which it is conducted, and the conditions which lead to the troops coming over to the side of the people. An extremely biased view on this latter point prevails in the Right wing of our Party. It is alleged that there is no possibility of fighting modern troops; the troops must become revolutionary. Of course, unless the revolution assumes a mass character and affects the troops, there can be no question of serious struggle. That we must work among the troops goes without saying. But we must not imagine that they will come over to our side at one stroke, as a result of persuasion or their own convictions. The Moscow uprising clearly demonstrated how stereotyped and lifeless this view is. As a matter of fact, the wavering of the troops, which is inevitable in every truly popular movement, leads to a real *fight for the troops* whenever the revolutionary struggle becomes acute. The Moscow uprising was precisely an example of the desperate, frantic struggle for the troops that takes place between the reaction and the revolution. Dubasov himself declared that of the fifteen thousand men of the Moscow garrison, only five thousand were reliable. The government restrained the waverers by the most diverse and desperate measures: they appealed to them, flattered them, bribed them, presented them with watches, money, etc.; they doped them with vodka, they lied to them, threatened them, confined them to barracks and disarmed them, and those who were suspected of being least reliable were removed by treachery and violence. And we must have the courage to confess, openly and unreservedly, that in this respect we lagged behind the government. We failed to utilise the forces at our disposal for such an active, bold, resourceful and aggressive fight for the wavering troops as that which the government waged and won. We have carried on work in the army and we will redouble our efforts in the future ideologically to "win over" the troops. But we shall prove to be miserable

pedants if we forget that at a time of uprising there must also be a physical struggle for the troops.

In the December days, the Moscow proletariat taught us magnificent lessons in ideologically "winning over" the troops, as, for example, on December 8 in Strastnaya Square, when the crowd surrounded the Cossacks, mingled and fraternised with them, and persuaded them to turn back. Or on December 10, in Presnya District, when two working girls, carrying a red flag in a crowd of 10,000 people, rushed out to meet the Cossacks crying: "Kill us! We will not surrender the flag alive!" And the Cossacks were disconcerted and galloped away, amidst the shouts from the crowd: "Hurrah for the Cossacks!" These examples of courage and heroism should be impressed forever on the mind of the proletariat.

But here are examples of how we lagged behind Dubasov. On December 9, soldiers were marching down Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street singing the *Marseillaise*, on their way to join the insurgents. The workers sent delegates to meet them. Malakhov himself galloped at breakneck speed towards them. The workers were too late, Malakhov reached them first. He delivered a passionate speech, caused the soldiers to waver, surrounded them with dragoons, marched them off to barracks and locked them in. Malakhov reached the soldiers in time and we did not, although within two days 150,000 people had risen at our call, and these could and should have organised the patrolling of the streets. Malakhov surrounded the soldiers with dragoons, whereas we failed to surround the Malakhovs with bomb-throwers. We could and should have done this; and long ago the Social-Democratic press (the old *Iskra*[83]) pointed out that ruthless extermination of civil and military chiefs was our duty during an uprising. What took place in Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street was apparently repeated in its main features in front of the Nesvizhskiye Barracks and the Krutitskiye Barracks, and also when the workers attempted to "withdraw" the Ekaterinoslav Regiment, and when delegates were sent to the sappers in Alexandrov, and when the Rostov artillery on its way to Moscow was turned back, and when the sappers were disarmed in Kolomna, and so on. During the uprising we proved unequal to our task in the fight for the wavering troops.

The December events confirmed another of Marx's profound propositions, which the opportunists have forgotten, namely, that insurrection is an art and that the principal rule of this art is the waging of a desperately bold and irrevocably determined *offensive*.[84] We have not sufficiently assimilated this truth. We ourselves have not sufficiently learned, nor have we taught the masses, this art, this rule to attack at all costs. We must make up for this omission with all our energy. It is not enough to take sides on the question of political slogans; it is also necessary to take sides on the question of an armed uprising. Those who are opposed to it, those who do not prepare for it, must be ruthlessly dismissed from the ranks of the supporters of the revolution, sent packing to its enemies, to the traitors or cowards; for the day is approaching when the force of events and the conditions of the struggle will compel us to distinguish between enemies and friends according to this principle. It is not passivity that we should preach, not mere "waiting" until the troops "come over". No! We must proclaim from the housetops the need for a bold offensive and armed attack, the necessity at such times of exterminating the persons in command of the enemy, and of a most energetic fight for the wavering troops.

The third great lesson taught by Moscow concerns the tactics and organisation of the forces for an uprising. Military tactics depend on the level of military technique. This plain truth Engels demonstrated and brought home to all Marxists.[85] Military technique today is not what it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. It would be folly to contend against artillery in crowds and defend barricades with revolvers. Kautsky was right when he wrote that it is high time now, after Moscow, to review Engels's conclusions, and that Moscow had inaugurated "*new barricade tactics*".[86] These tactics are the tactics of guerrilla warfare. The organisation required for such tactics is that of mobile and exceedingly small units, units of ten, three or even two persons. We often meet Social-Democrats now who scoff whenever units of five or three are mentioned. But scoffing is only a cheap way of ignoring the *new* question of tactics and organisation raised by street fighting under the conditions imposed by modern military technique. Study carefully the story

of the Moscow uprising, gentlemen, and you will understand what connection exists between "units of five" and the question of "new barricade tactics".

Moscow advanced these tactics, but failed to develop them far enough, to apply them to any considerable extent, to a really mass extent. There were too few volunteer fighting squads, the slogan of bold attack was not issued to the masses of the workers and they did not apply it; the guerrilla detachments were too uniform in character, their arms and methods were inadequate, their ability to lead the crowd was almost undeveloped. We must make up for all this and we shall do so by learning from the experience of Moscow, by spreading this experience among the masses and by stimulating their creative efforts to develop it still further. And the guerrilla warfare and mass terror that have been taking place throughout Russia practically without a break since December, will undoubtedly help the masses to learn the correct tactics of an uprising. Social-Democracy must recognise this mass terror and incorporate it into its tactics, organising and controlling it of course, subordinating it to the interests and conditions of the working-class movement and the general revolutionary struggle, while eliminating and ruthlessly lopping off the "hooligan" perversion of this guerrilla warfare which was so splendidly and ruthlessly dealt with by our Moscow comrades during the uprising and by the Letts during the days of the famous Lettish republics.[87]

There have been new advances in military technique in the very recent period. The Japanese War produced the hand grenade. The small-arms factories have placed automatic rifles on the market. Both these weapons are already being successfully used in the Russian revolution, but to a degree that is far from adequate. We can and must take advantage of improvements in technique, teach the workers' detachments to make bombs in large quantities, help them and our fighting squads to obtain supplies of explosives, fuses and automatic rilles. If the mass of the workers takes part in uprisings in the towns, if mass attacks are launched on the enemy, if a determined and skilful fight is waged for the troops, who after the Duma, after Sveaborg and Kronstadt are wavering more than ever—and if we ensure participation

of the rural areas in the general struggle—victory will be ours in the next all-Russian armed uprising.

Let us, then, develop our work more extensively and set our tasks more boldly, while mastering the lessons of the great days of the Russian revolution. The basis of our work is a correct estimate of class interests and of the requirements of the nation's development at the present juncture. We are rallying, and shall continue to rally, an increasing section of the proletariat, the peasantry and the army under the slogan of overthrowing the tsarist regime and convening a constituent assembly by a revolutionary government. As hitherto, the basis and chief content of our work is to develop the political understanding of the masses. But let us not forget that, in addition to this general, constant and fundamental task, times like the present in Russia impose other, particular and special tasks. Let us not become pedants and philistines, let us not evade these special tasks of the moment, these special tasks of the given forms of struggle, by meaningless references to our permanent duties, which remain unchanged at all times and in all circumstances.

Let us remember that a great mass struggle is approaching. It will be an armed uprising. It must, as far as possible, be simultaneous. The masses must know that they are entering upon an armed, bloody and desperate struggle. Contempt for death must become widespread among them and will ensure victory. The onslaught on the enemy must be pressed with the greatest vigour; attack, not defence, must be the slogan of the masses; the ruthless extermination of the enemy will be their task; the organisation of the struggle will become mobile and flexible; the wavering elements among the troops will be drawn into active participation. And in this momentous struggle, the party of the class-conscious proletariat must discharge its duty to the full.

Proletary, No. 2,
August 29, 1906

Published according to
the *Proletary* text

LA GUERRA DE GUERRILLAS (1)

La formación de destacamentos armados o de "equipos de combate" colocados bajo la dirección de los partidos había comenzado después de los acontecimientos de octubre de 1905. Su misión consistía entonces en responder a las "bandas negras", estipendiadas por la reacción, en el mismo terreno en que ellas operaban, impedir los pogroms, proteger las manifestaciones revolucionarias y obstaculizar las otras.

Las insurrecciones de diciembre impusieron a estos equipos y a las organizaciones de combate de los partidos un papel más vasto: el de parte beligerante frente a las tropas gubernamentales.

Después de la derrota y del fin de esas operaciones de gran extensión, cuando incluso el movimiento obrero parecía aplastado por un tiempo más o menos largo, los elementos activos que formaban parte de los equipos emplearon en otra forma su audacia revolucionaria: se lanzaron ya a los atentados aislados contra los representantes del poder, ya a las "expropiaciones" organizadas, asaltos de los bancos, de los transportes de fondos, de los trenes-correos, etc.

Estos fenómenos se generalizaron de un modo natural después de la disolución de la primera Duma, en el período de reacción y de represión que siguió. No dejaban de presentar, desde luego, peligros para el movimiento revolucionario. Frecuentemente, en efecto, los "expropiadores", en virtud del principio del menor esfuerzo, atacaban simplemente a tal o cual burgués, al cajero de una fábrica que transportaba los salarios de la semana, etc., de suerte que había una tendencia a hacer desaparecer la frontera entre el acto revolucionario y el crimen de derecho común. Por otra parte, los equipos de combate, en su trabajo muy especializado y que reclamaba una amplia libertad de acción, se

(1) Obras completas, segunda edición rusa, t. X, págs. 80-88.

emancipaban fácilmente de toda disciplina. Como a veces reclutaban imprudentemente sus miembros, corrían el riesgo de degenerar prácticamente en bandas que aterrorizaban menos a las autoridades que a las poblaciones. Inútil decir que en estos casos el producto de las expropiaciones iba a parar, ante todo, e incluso exclusivamente, a los bolsillos de sus autores.

Se trataba, pues, de abusos cuya frecuencia exigía que los partidos se mostrasen severos para con las acciones de los guerrilleros. Las dos tendencias que las aprobaban sin reservas, e incluso hacían de ellas lo esencial de su táctica, eran los anarquistas y los maximalistas. Los primeros, que en la primavera y en el verano de 1906 habían tenido una gran participación en el movimiento, multiplicaban los actos de terror político y económico y las expropiaciones de todas clases. Los segundos, que, antes de constituir en octubre de 1905 una Liga independiente, no eran más que un grupo de oposición en el seno del partido socialista-revolucionario, se hicieron conocer por actos de gran audacia.

Por el contrario, las autoridades oficiales del partido socialista-revolucionario habían, desde noviembre de 1905, proclamado el fin del terror y, si las insurrecciones de diciembre habían anulado de hecho esta decisión, el primer congreso del partido, en diciembre mismo, había condenado no menos expresamente las expropiaciones de los particulares.

Entre los socialdemócratas, los mencheviques, a quienes había repugnado siempre la preparación técnica de la insurrección y que sentían una gran debilidad por los medios parlamentarios, se inclinaban a no ver más que el lado malo o los peligros de la "guerra de guerrillas". La resolución que habían preparado para el Congreso de Estocolmo, sin pronunciar una condenación franca, insistía cuidadosamente sobre "los elementos desclasificados, los criminales y la hez de la población de las ciudades, que han tratado siempre de aprovecharse de las perturbaciones revolucionarias para sus fines antisociales"; sobre las "medidas severas" que el pueblo debía tomar "contra esta bacanal de robos y de pillaje" y terminaba sacando la conclusión de que era necesario: "a) combatir a los grupos y a los individuos que, bajo el nombre y la divisa del partido socialdemócrata, buscan un beneficio personal; b) evitar los aten-

tados contra las personas o los bienes privados de los ciudadanos pacíficos". La resolución reprobaba "la expropiación de los fondos depositados en los bancos privados y las contribuciones forzosas de todas suertes"; "la destrucción de edificios públicos, de vías férreas y otros establecimientos gubernamentales o privados", salvo en caso de necesidad puramente militar, y no admitía la confiscación de los fondos de las tesorerías del Estado más "que en caso de constitución de un gobierno revolucionario, y por orden suya".

Los bolcheviques, por el contrario, reconociendo que era un hecho la guerra de guerrillas, la cual desorganizaba a la reacción y educaba a los revolucionarios, invitaban al Congreso a "sancionar las acciones de los equipos pertenecientes o formados por afiliados al partido como admisibles en principio y útiles en el período actual". Admitían los bolcheviques, igualmente, las operaciones que tendían "a confiscar los fondos pertenecientes al enemigo, es decir, al gobierno autocrático, con objeto de emplearlos para las necesidades de la insurrección". Agregaban solamente que "las operaciones de guerrilleros deben efectuarse bajo la vigilancia del partido, de manera que no se gasten en vano las fuerzas del proletariado y que se tengan en cuenta el estado del movimiento obrero y de la opinión pública en la localidad". En el congreso fué adoptado el proyecto menchevista: los bolcheviques pidieron la supresión del pasaje sobre "la bacanal de robos y de pillaje" y propusieron que se admitiese la confiscación de los fondos de las cajas del Estado no solamente en caso de constitución de un gobierno revolucionario, sino también "por decisión de las organizaciones centrales o locales del partido". Las dos enmiendas fueron rechazadas: las "confiscaciones" de sumas pertenecientes al Estado estaban, pues, prácticamente prohibidas.

La resolución de Estocolmo suscitó un gran descontento entre los obreros bolcheviques, que estaban obligados de hecho a continuar la lucha armada contra las "bandas negras". La resolución tuvo este doble resultado: que los "acciones de guerrilleros" continuaron, pero que los comités del partido, sobre todo los comités mencheviques, se desinteresaron de ellas. Los miembros de los equipos de combate, que cada día arriesgaban su vida por el partido, se encontraron como separados de éste. De ahí los abusos y la desmoraliza-

ción, que no tardaron en generalizarse. Para poner fin a esta situación se reconoció necesario determinar las relaciones que debían existir entre "las organizaciones de combate" y el partido socialdemócrata. El Comité central no consintió en convocar más que las organizaciones que se ocupaban de la propaganda en el ejército. Fué necesario que los comités (bolcheviques) de Petersburgo y de Moscú reuniesen en Finlandia (en noviembre) una nueva conferencia más completa, que trató de todas las cuestiones: insurrección, guerrilleros, expropiaciones, terror, etc.

En el momento en que comenzó a discutirse sobre la convocatoria de estas conferencias es cuando Lenin escribió el artículo que sigue, para aclarar, desde el principio, su posición y la de los bolcheviques que mantenían un contacto más estrecho con los obreros revolucionarios.

∴

La cuestión de las operaciones de guerrillas interesa vivamente a nuestro partido y a la masa obrera. Hemos tratado ya varias veces someramente esta cuestión de un modo accidental; vamos a hacer ahora la exposición de conjunto de nuestras ideas que hemos prometido.

I

Procedamos por orden. ¿Cuales deben ser las exigencias fundamentales de todo marxista en la cuestión de las formas de lucha?

1.—El marxismo se distingue de todas las formas primitivas del socialismo en que no liga el movimiento a una sola forma de lucha determinada. El marxismo admite las formas más diversas; no las "inventa", sino que se limita a generalizar, organizar, hacer conscientes las formas de lucha de las clases revolucionarias que aparecen por sí mismas en el curso del movimiento. Enemigo absoluto de toda fórmula abstracta, de toda receta doctrinaria, el marxismo exige que se preste atención a la lucha de *masas*, la cual, a medida que el

GUERRILLA WARFARE

The question of guerrilla action is one that greatly interests our Party and the mass of the workers. We have dealt with this question in passing several times, and now we propose to give the more complete statement of our views we have promised.

I

Let us begin from the beginning. What are the fundamental demands which every Marxist should make of an examination of the question of forms of struggle? In the first place, Marxism differs from all primitive forms of socialism by not binding the movement to any one particular form of struggle. It recognises the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not "concoct" them, but only generalises, organises, gives conscious expression to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement. Absolutely hostile to all abstract formulas and to all doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the *mass* struggle in progress, which, as the movement develops, as the class-consciousness of the masses grows, as economic and political crises become acute, continually gives rise to new and more varied methods of defence and attack. Marxism, therefore, positively does not reject any form of struggle. Under no circumstances does Marxism confine itself to the forms of struggle possible and in existence at the given moment only, recognising as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, *inevitably* arise as the given social situation changes. In this respect Marxism *learns*, if we may

so express it, from mass practice, and makes no claim whatever to *teach* the masses forms of struggle invented by "systematisers" in the seclusion of their studies. We know—said Kautsky, for instance, when examining the forms of social revolution—that the coming crisis will introduce new forms of struggle that we are now unable to foresee.

In the second place, Marxism demands an absolutely *historical* examination of the question of the forms of struggle. To treat this question apart from the concrete historical situation betrays a failure to understand the rudiments of dialectical materialism. At different stages of economic evolution, depending on differences in political, national-cultural, living and other conditions, different forms of struggle come to the fore and become the principal forms of struggle; and in connection with this, the secondary, auxiliary forms of struggle undergo change in their turn. To attempt to answer yes or no to the question whether any particular means of struggle should be used, without making a detailed examination of the concrete situation of the given movement at the given stage of its development, means completely to abandon the Marxist position.

These are the two principal theoretical propositions by which we must be guided. The history of Marxism in Western Europe provides an infinite number of examples corroborating what has been said. European Social-Democracy at the present time regards parliamentarism and the trade union movement as the principal forms of struggle; it recognised insurrection in the past, and is quite prepared to recognise it, should conditions change, in the future—despite the opinion of bourgeois liberals like the Russian Cadets and the *Bezzaglavtsi*.[110] Social-Democracy in the seventies rejected the general strike as a social panacea, as a means of overthrowing the bourgeoisie at one stroke by non-political means—but Social-Democracy fully recognises the mass political strike (especially after the experience of Russia in 1905) as *one* of the methods of struggle essential under *certain* conditions. Social-Democracy recognised street barricade fighting in the forties, rejected it for definite reasons at the end of the nineteenth century, and expressed complete readiness to revise the latter view and to admit the expedi-

ency of barricade fighting after the experience of Moscow, which, in the words of K. Kautsky, initiated new tactics of barricade fighting.

II

Having established the general Marxist propositions, let us turn to the Russian revolution. Let us recall the historical development of the forms of struggle it produced. First there were the economic strikes of workers (1896-1900), then the political demonstrations of workers and students (1901-02), peasant revolts (1902), the beginning of mass political strikes variously combined with demonstrations (Rostov 1902, the strikes in the summer of 1903, January 9, 1905), the all-Russian political strike accompanied by local cases of barricade fighting (October 1905), mass barricade fighting and armed uprising (1905, December), the peaceful parliamentary struggle (April-June 1906), partial military revolts (June 1905-July 1906) and partial peasant revolts (autumn 1905-autumn 1906).

Such is the state of affairs in the autumn of 1906 as concerns forms of struggle in general. The "retaliatory" form of struggle adopted by the autocracy is the Black-Hundred pogrom, from Kishinev in the spring of 1903 to Sedlets in the autumn of 1906. All through this period the organisation of Black-Hundred pogroms and the beating up of Jews, students, revolutionaries and class-conscious workers continued to progress and perfect itself, combining the violence of Black-Hundred troops with the violence of hired ruffians, going as far as the use of artillery in villages and towns and merging with punitive expeditions, punitive trains and so forth.

Such is the principal background of the picture. Against this background there stands out—unquestionably as something partial, secondary and auxiliary—the phenomenon to the study and assessment of which the present article is devoted. What is this phenomenon? What are its forms? What are its causes? When did it arise and how far has it spread ? What is its significance in the general course of the revolution? What is its relation to the struggle of the working class organised and led by Social-Democracy? Such

are the questions which we must now proceed to examine after having sketched the general background of the picture.

The phenomenon in which we are interested is the *armed* struggle. It is conducted by individuals and by small groups. Some belong to revolutionary organisations, while others (the *majority* in certain parts of Russia) do not belong to any revolutionary organisation. Armed struggle pursues two *different* aims, which must be *strictly* distinguished: in the first place, this struggle aims at assassinating individuals, chiefs and subordinates in the army and police; in the second place, it aims at the confiscation of monetary funds both from the government and from private persons. The confiscated funds go partly into the treasury of the Party, partly for the special purpose of arming and preparing for an uprising, and partly for the maintenance of persons engaged in the struggle we are describing. The big expropriations (such as the Caucasian, involving over 200,000 rubles, and the Moscow, involving 875,000 rubles) went in fact first and foremost to revolutionary parties—small expropriations go mostly, and sometimes entirely, to the maintenance of the "expropriators". This form of struggle undoubtedly became widely developed and extensive only in 1906, i.e., after the December uprising. The intensification of the political crisis to the point of an armed struggle and, in particular, the intensification of poverty, hunger and unemployment in town and country, was one of the important causes of the struggle we are describing. This form of struggle was adopted as the preferable and even *exclusive* form of social struggle by the vagabond elements of the population, the lumpen proletariat and anarchist groups. Declaration of martial law, mobilisation of fresh troops, Black-Hundred pogroms (Sedlets), and military courts must be regarded as the "retaliatory" form of struggle adopted by the autocracy.

III

The usual appraisal of the struggle we are describing is that it is anarchism, Blanquism, the old terrorism, the acts of individuals isolated from the masses, which demoralise the workers, repel wide strata of the population, dis-

organise the movement and injure the revolution. Examples in support of this appraisal can easily be found in the events reported every day in the newspapers.

But are such examples convincing? In order to test this, let us take a locality where the form of struggle we are examining is *most* developed—the Lettish Territory. This is the way *Novoye Vremya* (in its issues of September 9 and 12) complains of the activities of the Lettish Social-Democrats. The Lettish Social-Democratic Labour Party (a section of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party) regularly issues its paper in 30,000 copies. The announcement columns publish lists of spies whom it is the duty of every decent person to exterminate. People who assist the police are proclaimed "enemies of the revolution", liable to execution and, moreover, to confiscation of property. The public is instructed to give money to the Social-Democratic Party only against signed and stamped receipt. In the Party's latest report, showing a total income of 48,000 rubles for the year, there figures a sum of 5,600 rubles contributed by the Libau branch for arms which was obtained by expropriation. Naturally, *Novoye Vremya* rages and fumes against this "revolutionary law", against this "terror government".

Nobody will be so bold as to call these activities of the Lettish Social-Democrats anarchism, Blanquism or terrorism. But why? Because here we have a *clear* connection between the new form of struggle and the uprising which broke out in December and which is again brewing. This connection is not so perceptible in the case of Russia as a whole, but it exists. The fact that "guerrilla" warfare became widespread precisely after December, and its connection with the accentuation not only of the economic crisis but also of the political crisis is beyond dispute. The old Russian terrorism was an affair of the intellectual conspirator; today as a general rule guerrilla warfare is waged by the worker combatant, or simply by the unemployed worker. Blanquism and anarchism easily occur to the minds of people who have a weakness for stereotype; but under the circumstances of an uprising, which are so apparent in the Lettish Territory, the inappropriateness of such trite labels is only too obvious.

The example of the Letts clearly demonstrates how incorrect, unscientific and unhistorical is the practice so very

common among us of analysing guerrilla warfare without reference to the circumstances of an uprising. These circumstances must be borne in mind, we must reflect on the peculiar features of an intermediate period between big acts of insurrection, we must realise what forms of struggle inevitably arise under such circumstances, and not try to shirk the issue by a collection of words learned by rote, such as are used equally by the Cadets and the *Novoye Vremya*-ites: anarchism, robbery, hooliganism!

It is said that guerrilla acts disorganise our work. Let us apply this argument to the situation that has existed since December 1905, to the period of Black-Hundred pogroms and martial law. What disorganises the movement more in *such* a period: the absence of resistance or organised guerrilla warfare? Compare the centre of Russia with her western borders, with Poland and the Lettish Territory. It is unquestionable that guerrilla warfare is far more widespread and far more developed in the western border regions. And it is equally unquestionable that the revolutionary movement in general, and the Social-Democratic movement in particular, are *more disorganised* in central Russia than in the western border regions. Of course, it would not enter our heads to conclude from this that the Polish and Lettish Social-Democratic movements are less disorganised *thanks* to guerrilla warfare. No. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that guerrilla warfare is not to blame for the state of disorganisation of the Social-Democratic working-class movement in Russia in 1906.

Allusion is often made in this respect to the peculiarities of national conditions. But this allusion very clearly betrays the weakness of the current argument. If it is a matter of national conditions then it is not a matter of anarchism, Blanquism or terrorism—sins that are common to Russia as a whole and even to the Russians especially—but of something else. Analyse this something else *concretely*, gentlemen! You will then find that national oppression or antagonism explain nothing, because they have always existed in the western border regions, whereas guerrilla warfare has been engendered only by the present historical period. There are many places where there is national oppression and antagonism, but no guerrilla struggle, which sometimes develops

where there is no national oppression whatever. A concrete analysis of the question will show that it is not a matter of national oppression, but of conditions of insurrection. Guerrilla warfare is an inevitable form of struggle at a time when the mass movement has actually reached the point of an uprising and when fairly large intervals occur between the "big engagements" in the civil war.

It is not guerrilla actions which disorganise the movement, but the weakness of a party which is incapable of taking such actions *under its control*. That is why the anathemas which we Russians usually hurl against guerrilla actions go hand in hand with secret, casual, unorganised guerrilla actions which really do disorganise the Party. Being incapable of understanding what historical conditions give rise to this struggle, we are incapable of neutralising its deleterious aspects. Yet the struggle is going on. It is engendered by powerful economic and political causes. It is not in our power to eliminate these causes or to eliminate this struggle. Our complaints against guerrilla warfare are complaints against our Party weakness in the matter of an uprising.

What we have said about disorganisation also applies to demoralisation. It is not guerrilla warfare which demoralises, but *unorganised*, irregular, non-party guerrilla acts. We shall not rid ourselves one least bit of this *most unquestionable* demoralisation by condemning and cursing guerrilla actions, for condemnation and curses are absolutely incapable of putting a stop to a phenomenon which has been engendered by profound economic and political causes. It may be objected that if we are incapable of putting a stop to an abnormal and demoralising phenomenon, this is no reason why the *Party* should adopt abnormal and demoralising methods of struggle. But such an objection would be a purely bourgeois-liberal and not a Marxist objection, because a Marxist cannot regard civil war, or guerrilla warfare, which is one of its forms, as abnormal and demoralising *in general*. A Marxist bases himself on the class struggle, and not social peace. In certain periods of acute economic and political crises the class struggle ripens into a direct civil war, i.e., into an armed struggle between two sections of the people. In such periods a Marxist is *obliged* to take the stand of

civil war. Any moral condemnation of civil war would be absolutely impermissible from the standpoint of Marxism.

In a period of civil war the ideal party of the proletariat is a *fighting party*. This is absolutely incontrovertible. We are quite prepared to grant that it is possible to argue and prove the *inexpediency* from the standpoint of civil war of particular forms of civil war at any particular moment. We fully admit criticism of diverse forms of civil war from the standpoint of *military expediency* and absolutely agree that in *this* question it is the Social-Democratic practical workers in each particular locality who must have the final say. But we absolutely demand in the name of the principles of Marxism that an analysis of the conditions of civil war should not be evaded by hackneyed and stereotyped talk about anarchism, Blanquism and terrorism, and that senseless methods of guerrilla activity adopted by some organisation or other of the Polish Socialist Party at some moment or other should not be used as a bogey when discussing the question of the participation of the Social-Democratic Party as such in guerrilla warfare in general.

The argument that guerrilla warfare disorganises the movement must be regarded critically. *Every* new form of struggle, accompanied as it is by new dangers and new sacrifices, inevitably "disorganises" organisations which are unprepared for this new form of struggle. Our old propagandist circles were disorganised by recourse to methods of agitation. Our committees were subsequently disorganised by recourse to demonstrations. Every military action in any war to a certain extent disorganises the ranks of the fighters. But this does not mean that one must not fight. It means that one must *learn* to fight. That is all.

When I see Social-Democrats proudly and smugly declaring "we are not anarchists, thieves, robbers, we are superior to all this, we reject guerrilla warfare",—I ask myself: Do these people realise what they are saying? Armed clashes and conflicts between the Black-Hundred government and the population are taking place all over the country. This is an absolutely inevitable phenomenon at the present stage of development of the revolution. The population is spontane-

ously and in an unorganised way—and for that very reason often in unfortunate and *undesirable* forms—reacting to this phenomenon also by armed conflicts and attacks. I can understand us refraining from Party leadership of *this* spontaneous struggle in a particular place or at a particular time because of the weakness and unpreparedness of our organisation. I realise that this question must be settled by the local practical workers, and that the remoulding of weak and unprepared organisations is no easy matter. But when I see a Social-Democratic theoretician or publicist not displaying regret over this unpreparedness, but rather a proud smugness and a self-exalted tendency to repeat phrases learned by rote in early youth about anarchism, Blanquism and terrorism, I am hurt by this degradation of the most revolutionary doctrine in the world.

It is said that guerrilla warfare brings the class-conscious proletarians into close association with degraded, drunken riff-raff. That is true. But it only means that the party of the proletariat can never regard guerrilla warfare as the only, or even as the chief, method of struggle; it means that this method must be subordinated to other methods, that it must be commensurate with the chief methods of warfare, and must be ennobled by the enlightening and organising influence of socialism. And without this *latter* condition, *all*, positively all, methods of struggle in bourgeois society bring the proletariat into close association with the various non-proletarian strata above and below it and, if left to the spontaneous course of events, become frayed, corrupted and prostituted. Strikes, if left to the spontaneous course of events, become corrupted into "alliances"—agreements between the workers and the masters *against* the consumers. Parliament becomes corrupted into a brothel, where a gang of bourgeois politicians barter wholesale and retail "national freedom", "liberalism", "democracy", republicanism, anti-clericalism, socialism and all other wares in demand. A newspaper becomes corrupted into a public pimp, into a means of corrupting the masses, of pandering to the low instincts of the mob, and so on and so forth. Social-Democracy knows of no universal methods of struggle, such as would shut off the proletariat by a Chinese wall from the strata standing slightly above or slightly below it. At different

periods Social-Democracy applies different methods, *always* qualifying the choice of them by *strictly* defined ideological and organisational conditions.*

IV

The forms of struggle in the Russian revolution are distinguished by their colossal variety compared with the bourgeois revolutions in Europe. Kautsky partly foretold this in 1902 when he said that the future revolution (with the exception *perhaps* of Russia, he added) might be not so much a struggle of the people against the government as a struggle between two sections of the people. In Russia we undoubtedly see a wider development of this *latter* struggle than in the bourgeois revolutions in the West. The enemies of our revolution among the people are few in number, but as the struggle grows more acute they become more and more organised and receive the support of the reactionary strata of the bourgeoisie. It is therefore absolutely natural and inevitable that in *such* a period, a period of nation-wide political strikes, an *uprising* cannot assume the old form of individual acts restricted to a very short time and to a very small area. It is absolutely natural and inevitable that the uprising should assume the higher and more complex form of a

* The Bolshevik Social-Democrats are often accused of a frivolous passion for guerrilla actions. It would therefore not be amiss to recall that in the draft resolution on guerrilla actions (*Partiiniye Izvestia*, No. 2, and Lenin's report on the Congress), *the section* of the Bolsheviks who defend guerrilla actions suggested the following conditions for their recognition: "expropriations" of private property were not to he permitted under any circumstances; "expropriations" of government property were not to be recommended but only *allowed*, provided that they *were controlled by the Party* and their proceeds used *for the needs of an uprising*. Guerrilla acts in the form of terrorism were to be *recommended* against brutal government officials and *active* members of the Black Hundreds, but on condition that 1) the sentiments of the masses be taken into account, 2) the conditions of the working-class movement in the given locality be reckoned with, and 3) care be taken that the forces of the proletariat should not be frittered away. The practical difference between this draft and the resolution which was adopted at the Unity Congress lies *exclusively* in the fact that "expropriations" of government property are not allowed.

prolonged civil war embracing the whole country, i.e., an armed struggle between two sections of the people. Such a war cannot be conceived otherwise than as a series of a few big engagements at comparatively long intervals and a large number of small encounters during these intervals. That being so—and it is undoubtedly so—the Social-Democrats must absolutely make it their duty to create organisations best adapted to lead the masses in these big engagements and, as far as possible, in these small encounters as well. In a period when the class struggle has become accentuated to the point of civil war, Social-Democrats must make it their duty not only to participate but also to play the leading role in *this civil war*. The Social-Democrats must train and prepare their organisations to be really able to act as a *belligerent side* which does not miss a single opportunity of inflicting damage on the enemy's forces.

This is a difficult task, there is no denying. It cannot be accomplished at once. Just as the whole people are being retrained and are learning to fight in the course of the civil war, so our organisations must be trained, must be reconstructed in conformity with the lessons of experience to be equal to this task.

We have not the slightest intention of foisting on practical workers any artificial form of struggle, or even of deciding from our armchair what part any particular form of guerrilla warfare should play in the general course of the civil war in Russia. We are far from the thought of regarding a concrete assessment of particular guerrilla actions as indicative of a *trend* in Social-Democracy. But we do regard it as our duty to help as far as possible to arrive at a correct *theoretical* assessment of the new forms of struggle engendered by practical life. We do regard it as our duty relentlessly to combat stereotypes and prejudices which hamper the class-conscious workers in correctly presenting a new and difficult problem and in correctly approaching its solution.

Proletary, No. 5,
September 30, 1906

Published according to
the *Proletary* text

THE QUESTION OF GUERRILLA WARFARE[111]

We consider this resolution sound in principle and note its agreement with the points we developed in our article "Guerrilla Warfare". We would suggest only a few minor amendments and additions to the text of the resolution. In Point 3 of the preamble we would say: "the revolution not being strong enough *at the present time*", etc. In the resolution proper we would add repudiation of "expropriations" in agreement with the decision of the Congress, and then a statement to the effect that guerrilla actions must conform to the temper of the broad masses and the conditions of the working-class movement. It is clear, however, that our Moscow comrades take this for granted.

Proletary, No. 5,
September 30, 1906

Published according to
the *Proletary* text

LA SOCIALDEMOCRACIA Y LOS ACUERDOS ELECTORALES (1)

La doctrina expuesta aquí por Lenin no quedó en lo abstracto. La "Oficina técnica del Comité central", colocada bajo la influencia de los bolcheviques, había ya preparado y ejecutado, de concierto con los maximalistas, el atentado contra la villa del presidente del Consejo de ministros Stolypin (12 de agosto de 1906), y el 13 de octubre siguiente debía tomar parte aún, en San Petersburgo, en el pillaje del coche que transportaba una suma considerable perteneciente al Banco de Estado.

Del mismo modo, los principios preconizados no tenían nada de utópico: los guerrilleros del Cáucaso, dirigidos por el famoso Kamo, no dieron jamás lugar a ninguna crítica; en cuanto a los del Ural, podían incluso servir de ilustración a estas reglas de conducta. En 1905 habían organizado una "milicia armada", que resistió durante años a la policía y a la tropa. Los comités (casi enteramente bolcheviques) de Perm, Ekaterinburg y Ufa tenían "grupos de cinco" y de diez, Estados mayores que operaban en relación con ellos, cursos de instrucción militar, maniobras, un servicio de informes, etc. La conferencia de las organizaciones militares y de combate celebrada en noviembre en Tammersfors, en Finlandia, aprobó toda esta organización. Fueron efectuadas numerosas "expropiaciones": el dinero era cuidadosamente registrado cada vez en los libros, después remitido a los comités del partido para editar periódicos, sostener las "escuelas militares" y alimentar la caja del Comité central. Una parte de las sumas recogidas sirvió para pagar los gastos de los delegados enviados al congreso de Londres.

El congreso de Londres, el V del partido, que duró del 20 de abril al 19 de mayo de 1907, y en el cual los bolcheviques tenían una pequeña mayoría, votó, no

(1) Obras completas, segunda edición rusa, t. VII, páginas 127-146.

absoluto, una resolución condenando las operaciones de guerrillas como desorganizadoras y desmoralizadoras, prohibiendo a los miembros del partido "toda participación en las operaciones de guerrillas o en las expropiaciones" y ordenando la disolución de "todos los equipos especiales de combate existentes cerca de las organizaciones del partido". Un cierto número de bolcheviques, contra Lenin y la mayoría de su fracción, había votado este texto, lo que equivalía al abandono de toda lucha armada contra el zarismo y la reacción.

Después de la disolución de la Duma, el gobierno de Stolypin se propuso un doble fin: reprimir implacablemente la revolución y calmar, por medio de algunas reformas, el descontento. De ahí los Consejos de guerra sumarísimos y los alientos dados a los Cien negros de una parte, y de otra, las medidas que tendían a crear en los campos una clase de campesinos acomodados, apoyo futuro del poder. Sin embargo, era preciso pensar en las próximas elecciones: en octubre de 1906 el Senado publicó enmiendas a la ley electoral que disminuían sensiblemente los derechos de los obreros, de los empleados modestos, de la mayoría de los intelectuales y de los campesinos.

A partir del mes de julio, Stolypin había emprendido negociaciones con los representantes de la opinión pública moderada. Logró ganar a su programa de "represión para realizar las reformas" a varios hombres que pasaban por estar en la oposición. Era la "Liga del 17 de Octubre" que se ponía al servicio del gobierno, manifestando así un serio cambio de orientación en las disposiciones de la nobleza agraria.

La burguesía liberal no podía dejar de seguirla. Los cadetes, viendo que no había compromiso posible con un gobierno que empleaba la manera fuerte, comprendieron que era necesario o bien entrar en la vía revolucionaria, o bien someterse, y optaron por tomar este segundo partido. En su Congreso de Helsingfors, a fines de septiembre de 1906, repudiaron formalmente su manifiesto de Viborg. Sin embargo, en la campaña electoral, algunos de entre ellos, la minoría de Helsingfors, sintiendo su debilidad en el pueblo, no estaban lejos de hacer un bloque con los socialdemócratas acomodaticios. Sus periódicos abrían incluso para esos sus columnas a mencheviques como Mártov y Chervanin.

Los partidos revolucionarios habían renunciado al boicot, los socialistas-revolucionarios lo habían hecho solamente bajo la presión de los electores, los socialistas populistas (separados de ellos desde 1906 y agrupados alrededor de la vieja revista Ruskoie Bogatstvo) *con toda franqueza. Los laboristas, que no eran en la primera Duma más que una fracción parlamentaria bastante inconsistente y sin organizaciones en el país, se organizaban en partido, precisamente con vistas a las elecciones próximas. Estos tres grupos representaban las aspiraciones más o menos revolucionarias, en todo caso democráticas, de la pequeña burguesía, sobre todo de la rural.*

En la socialdemocracia igualmente la cuestión que se planteaba no era ya la del boicot, enterrado por el Congreso de Estokolmo, sino la de la táctica a seguir en las elecciones. La opinión de la mayoría de los menchevikis es relatada así por Mártov en su Historia del partido socialdemócrata ruso: *"Sin dejar de mantener la independencia del partido en las elecciones, sostener resueltamente al liberalismo allí donde prácticamente la opción se imponga entre él y la reacción y, por consiguiente, no negarse a los acuerdos electorales, incluso en el primer grado". Sin embargo, hubo discusión al principio sobre este último punto, y el Comité central vaciló mucho tiempo antes de adherirse a la opinión más oportunista, la de Chervanin. La opinión de los bolcheviques fué expresada por Lenin en un breve folleto intitulado* La socialdemocracia y los acuerdos electorales, *escrito a fines de octubre de* 1906 (*publicado en noviembre*), *y cuyo principio se encontrará a continuación.*

∴

La cuestión de la campaña electoral para la segunda Duma interesa vivamente en este momento al partido obrero. Se presta una atención particularísima a los "bloques", es decir, a los acuerdos electorales, temporales o permanentes, de la socialdemocracia con otros partidos. La prensa burguesa, cadete, la *Riech* (*La Palabra*), el *Tovarichtch* (*El Camarada*), el *Novy Put* (*La*

⁂

En los capítulos que siguen, Lenin examina, como lo ha anunciado, el estado de los partidos y las particularidades del sistema electoral:

1. En cuanto a los cadetes, después de su conducta en la primera Duma, no se puede hacer otra cosa que combatirles; con los laboristas no es posible ningún bloque, pues encierran en su seno a la vez sin-partido, socialistas-revolucionarios verdaderamente revolucionarios y republicanos, y socialistas-populistas oportunistas, semicadetes. Conclusión: ningún acuerdo en el primer grado ante las masas; en los grados superiores, en el reparto de los puestos, derrotar a los cadetes por medio de un acuerdo parcial con los laboristas, derrotar a los socialistas-populistas mediante un acuerdo parcial con los socialistas-revolucionarios.

2. El peligro de dividir a la oposición enfrente de la reacción, en las ciudades, no es tan grande que pueda justificar la renuncia a candidaturas proletarias; en el campo, como los campesinos revolucionarios no están ligados de un modo expreso a ningún partido, no hay ninguna ventaja en obrar de concierto con los socialistas-revolucionarios: por tanto, es preferible hacerlo con nuestro propio programa socialdemócrata; por el contrario, "en los grados superiores, los acuerdos son indispensables y desde luego posibles sin atentar contra el carácter de nuestro partido, pues la lucha ante las masas está terminada, no hay ya necesidad de sostener ante el pueblo, directa o indirectamente (o de tolerar) la idea de neutralidad política, no hay ningún riesgo de obscurecer la política de clase independiente del proletariado".

THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS AND ELECTORAL AGREEMENTS[126]

Written towards the end of October 1906
Published in pamphlet form in November 1906 by *Vperyod* Publishers

Published according to the pamphlet text

The election campaign for the Second Duma is now a subject of great interest in the workers' party. Special attention is being devoted to the question of "blocs", i.e., permanent or temporary electoral agreements between the Social-Democrats and other parties. The bourgeois, Cadet press—*Rech*, *Tovarishch*, *Novy Put*, *Oko*, etc.—are doing their utmost to convince the workers of the need for a "bloc" (an electoral agreement) between the Social-Democrats and the Cadets. Some Menshevik Social-Democrats are also advocating such blocs (Cherevanin in *Nashe Dyelo* and *Tovarishch*), others are opposed to them (Martov in *Tovarishch*). The Bolshevik Social-Democrats are opposed to such blocs, and agree only to partial agreements at the higher stages of the election campaign on the distribution of seats in proportion to the polling strength of the revolutionary and opposition parties at the primary ballot.

We shall try to state briefly the case for this last standpoint.

I

Social-Democrats regard parliamentarism (participation in representative assemblies) as one of the means of enlightening and educating the proletariat and organising it in an independent class party; as one of the methods of the political struggle for the emancipation of the workers. This Marxist standpoint radically distinguishes Social-Democracy from bourgeois democracy, on the one hand, and from anarchism on the other. Bourgeois liberals and radicals regard parliamentarism as the "natural" and the only normal and legitimate method of conducting state affairs in general,

and they repudiate the class struggle and the class character of modern parliamentarism. The bourgeoisie exerts every effort, by every possible means and on every possible occasion, to put blinkers on the eyes of the workers to prevent them from seeing that parliamentarism is an instrument of bourgeois oppression, to prevent them from realising the historically limited importance of parliamentarism. The anarchists are also unable to appreciate the historically defined importance of parliamentarism and entirely renounce this method of struggle. That is why the Social-Democrats in Russia strenuously combat both anarchism and the efforts of the bourgeoisie to *stop* the revolution as soon as possible by coming to terms with the old regime on a parliamentary basis. They subordinate their parliamentary activities entirely and absolutely to the general interests of the working-class movement and to the special tasks of the proletariat in the present bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Hence it follows, firstly, that the participation of the Social-Democrats in the Duma campaign is of a quite different nature from that of other parties. Unlike them, we do not regard this campaign as an end in itself or even as being of cardinal importance. Unlike them, we subordinate this campaign to the interests of the class struggle. Unlike them, the slogan we put forward in this campaign is not parliamentarism for the sake of parliamentary reforms, but the revolutionary struggle for a constituent assembly. Moreover, we wage this struggle in its highest forms, which have arisen from the historical development of the forms of struggle during the last few years.*

---

* We shall not here touch on the question of boycott, as this does not come within the scope of this pamphlet. We shall only remark that this question cannot be properly appraised apart from the *concrete* historical situation. The boycott of the Bulygin Duma was *successful*. The boycott of the Witte Duma was necessary and *correct*. The revolutionary Social-Democrats must be *the first* to take the line of the most resolute, the most direct struggle, and must be *the last* to adopt more circuitous methods of struggle. The Stolypin Duma cannot be boycotted in the old way, and it would be wrong to do so after the experience of the First Duma.

II

What conclusion follows from the foregoing in regard to electoral agreements? First of all, that our basic, main task is to develop the class-consciousness and independent class organisation of the proletariat, as the only class that remains revolutionary to the end, as the only possible leader of a victorious bourgeois-democratic revolution. Therefore, class independence throughout the election and Duma campaigns is our most important general task. This does not exclude other, partial tasks, but the latter must always be subordinate to and in conformity with it. This general premise, which is confirmed by the theory of Marxism and the whole experience of the international Social-Democratic movement, must be our point of departure.

The special tasks of the proletariat in the Russian revolution may seem at once to controvert this general premise on the following grounds: the big bourgeoisie has already betrayed the revolution through the Octobrists, or has made it its aim to put a stop to the revolution by means of a constitution (the Cadets); the victory of the revolution is possible only if the proletariat is supported by the most progressive and politically conscious section of the peasantry, whose objective position impels it to fight and not to compromise, to carry through and not to curb the revolution. Hence, some may conclude, the Social-Democrats must enter into agreements with the democratic peasantry for the whole duration of the elections.

But such a conclusion cannot be drawn from the absolutely correct premise that the complete victory of our revolution is possible only in the form of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. It has yet to be proved that a bloc with the democratic peasantry for the whole duration of the elections is possible and advantageous from the point of view of present party relationships (the democratic-peasantry in our country is now represented not by one, but by various parties) and from the point of view of the present electoral system. It has yet to be proved that by forming a bloc with this or that party we shall express and uphold the interests of the truly revolutionary sections of the peasantry better than by preserving

the complete independence of our Party in criticising *such-and-such* democratic peasant parties, and in *counterposing* some elements of the democratic peasantry to others. The premise that the proletariat is closest to the revolutionary peasantry in the present revolution undoubtedly leads to the general political "line" of Social-Democracy: together with the democratic peasantry against the treacherous big-bourgeois "democrats" (the Cadets). But whether it leads to the formation *at the present time* of an election bloc with the Popular Socialists (Popular Socialist Party), or the Socialist-Revolutionaries cannot be decided without an analysis of the features which distinguish *these* parties from each other and from the Cadets, without an analysis of the *present* electoral system with its numerous stages. Only one thing follows from it, directly and *absolutely*: under no circumstances can we during our election campaign confine ourselves to baldly and abstractly counterposing the proletariat to the bourgeois democrats in general. On the contrary, we must devote our whole attention to drawing a precise distinction, based on the *historical facts* of our revolution, between the liberal-monarchist and the revolutionary-democratic bourgeoisie, or, to put it more concretely, to the distinction between the Cadets, Popular Socialists, and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Only by drawing such a distinction shall we be able to determine most correctly who our closest "allies" are. But, firstly, we shall not forget that the Social-Democrats must watch *every* ally from the bourgeois democrats as they would an enemy. Secondly, we shall examine very carefully to see which is most advantageous: to tie our hands in a *general* bloc with some Popular Socialists (for instance), or to preserve complete independence so as to be quite free at the decisive moment to split the non-party "Trudoviks" into opportunists (P.S.'s) and revolutionaries (S.-R.'s), to *counterpose* the latter to the former, etc.

Thus, the argument about the proletarian-peasant character of our revolution does not entitle us to conclude that we must enter into agreements with this or that democratic peasant party at this or that stage of the elections to the Second Duma. It is not even a sufficient argument for limiting the class independence of the proletariat during the elections, let alone for renouncing this independence.

III

In order to come nearer to the solution of our problem we must, firstly, examine the fundamental party groupings in the elections to the Second Duma and, secondly, examine the specific features of the present electoral system.

Electoral agreements are concluded between parties. What are the main types of parties that will contest the elections? The Black Hundreds will no doubt unite even more closely than during the elections to the First Duma. The Octobrists and the Party of Peaceful Renovation will join either the Black Hundreds or the Cadets, or, more probably, will oscillate between the two. In any case, to regard the Octobrists as a "party of the Centre" (as L. Martov does in his latest pamphlet, *Political Parties in Russia*) is a fundamental error: in the *actual* struggle which must finally decide the outcome of our revolution, the *Cadets* form the *Centre*. The Cadets are an organised party that is going into the elections independently and, moreover, is intoxicated with its success at the First Duma elections. But the discipline of this party is not of the strictest and its solidarity not of the strongest. The Left-wing Cadets are disgruntled about the defeat at Helsingfors[127] and are protesting. Some of them (Mr. Alexinsky in Moscow, recently) are going over to the Popular Socialists. In the First Duma there were some "exceptionally rare" Cadets who even gave their signatures to the Bill of the "33" for the abolition of all private ownership of land (Badamshin, Zubchenko and Lozhkin). Hence, to split off at least a small section from this "Centre" and bring it towards the Left is not a hopeless proposition. The Cadets are only too conscious of their weakness among the mass of the people (quite recently even the Cadet *Tovarishch* had to admit this), and they would readily agree to a bloc with the Lefts. It is not for nothing that the Cadet newspapers have with such tender joy opened their columns to the Social-Democrats Martov and Cherevanin to discuss the question of a bloc between the Social-Democrats and the Cadets. We, of course, will never forget, and will tell it to the masses during the election campaign, that the Cadets failed to keep their promises in the First Duma, that they obstructed the Trudoviks, played at making constitutions, etc., etc., going

to the extent of keeping silent about the "four points",[128] the Draconian Bills, and so forth.

Next come the "Trudoviks". The parties of this type, namely the petty-bourgeois and predominantly peasant parties, are divided into the *non-party* "Trudovik Group" (which held a congress recently), the Popular Socialists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries (the Polish Socialist Party, etc., correspond more or less to the Socialist-Revolutionaries). The only more or less consistent and determined revolutionaries and republicans among them are the S.-R.'s. The Popular Socialists are much worse opportunists than our Mensheviks; strictly speaking, they are semi-Cadets. The non-party "Trudovik Group" has, perhaps, more influence among the peasantry than the others; but the strength of its democratic convictions is difficult to determine, although it is undoubtedly far more Left than the Cadets, and evidently belongs to the camp of revolutionary democracy.

The Social-Democratic Party is the only party which, in spite of internal dissensions, will enter the elections as a thoroughly disciplined body, which has a fully definite and strictly class basis, and which has united all the Social-Democratic parties of all the nationalities in Russia.

But how are we to enter into a general bloc with the Trudoviks, considering the *composition* of this type of party, as outlined above? What sureties have we for the *non-party* Trudoviks? Is a bloc possible between party and non-party people? How do we know that Alexinsky & Co. will not, tomorrow, turn from the Popular Socialists back to the Cadets?

It is clear that a *real* party agreement with the Trudoviks is *impossible*. It is clear that we must not under any circumstances help to unite the opportunist Popular Socialists with the revolutionary S.-R.'s; on the contrary, we must split them and counterpose one to the other. It is clear that the existence of a non-party Trudovik Group makes it more to our advantage in all respects to preserve complete independence in order to exert a really revolutionary influence upon them than to tie our hands and blur the distinctions between the monarchists and the republicans, etc. It is *absolutely impermissible* for Social-Democrats to blur these distinctions; and for this reason alone it is necessary to reject blocs alto-

gether, once the *present* grouping of parties unites the non-party Trudoviks, the Popular Socialists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Can they really unite, and are they doing so? They certainly can unite, for they have the same petty-bourgeois class basis. They were, in fact, united in the First Duma, in the press during the October period, in the press of the Duma period, and in the ballots among the students (*si licet parva componere magnis*—if the small may be compared with the great). A minor symptom, but a characteristic one when connected with others, is the fact that in the ballots of the "autonomous" students there were often three conflicting lists: the Cadets, the bloc of the Trudoviks, Popular Socialists, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Polish Socialist Party, and, lastly, the Social-Democrats.

From the point of view of the proletariat, clarity as regards the class grouping of the parties is of supreme importance; and the advantage of independently influencing the non-party Trudoviks (or those who are oscillating between the Popular Socialists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) is obvious compared with attempts by the Party to reach an agreement with the non-party people. The facts relating to the *parties* compel the following conclusion: no agreements whatsoever at the lower stage, when agitation is carried on among the masses; at the higher stages all efforts must be directed towards defeating the Cadets during the distribution of seats by means of a partial agreement between the Social-Democrats and Trudoviks, and towards defeating the Popular Socialists by means of a partial agreement between the Social-Democrats and the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The objection will be raised: while you incorrigibly utopian Bolsheviks are dreaming of defeating the Cadets, you will all be defeated by the Black Hundreds, because you will *split the vote*! The Social-Democrats, the Trudoviks and the Cadets together would rout the Black Hundreds for certain; but by acting separately, you may present the common enemy with an easy victory. Let us assume that the Black Hundreds get 26 per cent of the votes, the Trudoviks and Cadets 25 per cent each, and the Social-Democrats 24 per cent. The Black Hundreds will get in unless the Social-Democrats, the Trudoviks and the Cadets form a bloc.

This objection is often taken seriously, and so we must carefully analyse it. But in order to analyse it, we must examine the *given*, i.e., the present electoral system in Russia.

IV

Our Duma elections are not direct, but multiple-stage elections. In multiple-stage elections the splitting of votes is dangerous only at the lower stage. It is only when the primary voters go to the poll that the division of the votes is an unknown quantity; it is only in our agitation among the masses that we have to work "in the dark". At the higher stages, when the elected representatives vote, the general engagement is over; all that remains is to distribute the seats by partial agreements among the parties, which *know* the exact number of their candidates and their votes.

The lowest stage in the elections is the election of electors in the cities, the election of representatives—one per ten households—in the villages, and the election of delegates to the workers' curia.

In the cities, in every electoral area (ward, etc.), we face a great mass of voters. There is, undoubtedly, a danger of splitting the vote. It cannot be denied that in the cities Black-Hundred electors may be elected in some places *exclusively* because of the absence of a "bloc of the Lefts", exclusively because, let us say, the Social-Democrats may divert part of the votes from the Cadets. It will be recalled that in Moscow Guchkov received something like 900 votes, and the Cadets about 1,400. If a Social-Democrat had taken 501 votes from the Cadet, Guchkov would have won. And there is no doubt that the general public will take this simple calculation into account; they will be afraid of splitting the vote, and because of that will be inclined to cast their votes only for the most moderate of the opposition candidates. We shall have what is called in England a "three-cornered" fight, when the urban petty bourgeoisie are afraid to vote for a socialist candidate because it would take votes from the liberal and thus allow the conservative to win.

How can this danger be averted? There is only one way: to conclude an agreement at the lower stage, that is, put up

SOBRE LA CUESTION DE LA REVOLUCION "NACIONAL" (1)

Una conferencia reunida en Finlandia a principios de noviembre de 1906 aprobó en su conjunto la táctica electoral de los mencheviques, y la campaña del partido se realizó generalmente con arreglo a esta concepción. En la organización de San Petersburgo esta decisión dió lugar, sin embargo, casi a una escisión entre los partidarios del "bloque de las izquierdas" y los partidarios del acuerdo con los cadetes, sostenidos por el Comité central.

A pesar de la presión gubernamental, 64 diputados socialdemócratas fueron elegidos en Rusia. La mayoría de esta "fracción parlamentaria" estaba compuesta por mencheviques. Así, su política tendió, desde la apertura de la Duma, el 20 de febrero de 1907, a un acuerdo con el centro liberal para empujar a este último a una oposición más abierta; los diputados bolchevikis buscaban, contra el centro director, una estrecha aproximación con los partidos campesinos. Cuando se trató de elegir el presidente de la Cámara, la fracción decidió, por mayoría, sostener al candidato de la oposición liberal, el cadete Golovin. Los bolchevikis, por el contrario, un poco más tarde, se negaron a tomar parte en la conferencia de los partidos de oposición.

La polémica entre las dos tendencias se prosiguió en la prensa legal de que disponían entonces; los mencheviques tenían la Narodnaia Gazeta (La Gazeta Popular) *y los bolcheviques* Nache Echo (Nuestro Eco), *los dos diarios. En fin, el congreso del partido, desde hacía mucho tiempo reclamado por los bolcheviques, se reunió, y la cuestión de las relaciones con los partidos burgueses fué una de las primeras del orden del día.*

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edición rusa, t. VIII, páginas 369-370.

El artículo siguiente fué escrito por Lenin pocos días antes de su partida de Finlandia para Copenhague, donde debían reunirse los delegados (1).

* * *

Para obtener la victoria, la revolución debe, en cierto sentido, ser nacional. En efecto, la victoria de la revolución exige la unión en la lucha por sus reivindicaciones de la enorme mayoría de la población. Esta enorme mayoría puede ser compuesta de una sola clase o de diversas clases que tengan ciertos objetivos idénticos. En cuanto a la revolución rusa actual, es exacto que no puede triunfar más que como revolución nacional *en el sentido* de que su victoria exige la participación consciente en la lucha de la enorme mayoría de la población.

Pero a esto se limita la justeza relativa de la expresión corriente de revolución "nacional". Fuera de lo que acaba de decirse, y que no es, propiamente hablando, más que una verdad elemental (la victoria sobre una minoría organizada y dominante no puede pertenecer más que a una enorme mayoría) no se podría sacar ninguna otra deducción de esta noción. Es, pues, radicalmente falso y profundamente antimarxista emplearla como una fórmula general, como un modelo, como un criterio de táctica. La noción de revolución "nacional" debe recordar al marxista la necesidad de analizar bien los diversos intereses de las *diversas* clases, que se aproximan por ciertos objetivos comunes determinados y limitados. En ningún caso esta noción debe disminuir la importancia del estudio de la lucha de clases o eclipsarla en el curso de una revolución dada. Un uso semejante de dicha noción equivaldría a renegar del marxismo y a volver a la fraseología vulgar de los demócratas o de los socialistas pequeño-burgueses.

(1) Estos fueron expulsados casi inmediatamente por la policía, y el congreso se celebró finalmente en Londres.

ON THE QUESTION OF A NATION-WIDE REVOLUTION

In a certain sense of the word, it is only a nation-wide revolution that can be victorious. This is true in the sense that the unity of the overwhelming majority of the population in the struggle for the demands of that revolution is essential for victory to be won. This overwhelming majority must consist either entirely of one class, or of different classes that have certain aims in common. It is also true, of course, that the present Russian revolution can be victorious only if it is nation-wide *in that specific sense* of the word that the conscious participation of the overwhelming majority of the population in the struggle is essential for victory to be won.

That, however, is the limit of the conventional truthfulness of the catchword of a "nation-wide" revolution. No further conclusions can be drawn from this concept, which is nothing but a truism (only an overwhelming majority can be victorious over an organised and dominant minority). For this reason it is fundamentally incorrect and profoundly un-Marxist to apply it as a general formula, as a model, a criterion of tactics. The concept of a "nation-wide revolution" should tell the Marxist of the need for a precise analysis of those varied interests of *different* classes that coincide in certain definite, limited common aims. Under no circumstances must this concept serve *to conceal* or overshadow the study of the class struggle in the course of any revolution. Such use of the concept of "nation-wide revolution" amounts to a complete rejection of Marxism and a return to the vulgar phraseology of the petty-bourgeois democrats or petty-bourgeois socialists.

This truth is frequently forgotten by our Social-Democratic Right wing. Still more frequently do they forget that *class relations in a revolution change with the progress of that revolution*. All real revolutionary progress means drawing broader masses into the movement; consequently—a greater consciousness of class interests; consequently—more clearly-defined political, party groupings and more precise outlines of the class physiognomy of the various parties; consequently—greater replacement of general, abstract, unclear political and economic demands that are vague in their abstractness, by the *varying* concrete, clearly-defined demands of the different classes.

For instance, the Russian bourgeois revolution, like any other bourgeois revolution, inevitably begins under the common slogans of "political liberty" and "popular interests"; only in the course of the struggle, the concrete meaning of those slogans becomes clear to the masses and to the different classes, only to the extent that a practical attempt is made to implement that "liberty", to give a *definite* content even to such a hollow-sounding word as "democracy". Prior to the bourgeois revolution, and at its onset, all speak in the name of democracy—the proletariat and the peasantry together with urban petty-bourgeois elements, and the liberal bourgeoisie together with the liberal landlords. It is only in the course of the class struggle, only in the course of a more or less lengthy historical development of the revolution, that the different understanding of this "democracy" by the different classes is revealed. And what is more, the deep gulf between the interests of the different classes is revealed in their demands for *different* economic and political measures, in the name of one and the same "democracy".

Only in the course of the struggle, only as the revolution develops, is it revealed that one "democratic" class or stratum does not want to go, or cannot go, as far as another, that while "common" (allegedly common) objectives are being achieved, fierce skirmishes develop around the *method* by which they are to be achieved, for example, on the degree, extent or consistency of freedom and power of the people, or the manner in which land is to be transferred to the peasantry, etc.

We have had to recall all these forgotten truths so as to enable the reader to understand the dispute that recently took place between two newspapers. This is what one of them, *Narodnaya Gazeta*, wrote against the other, *Nashe Ekho*.

"'The grouping of the population by party,' wrote *Nashe Ekho*, 'that important political lesson and the revolution's most important political acquisition at the time of the elections to the Second Duma, showed clearly by nation-wide facts that broad strata of the landlords and bourgeoisie are swinging to the Right.' Quite true. But the mood and the mandates which the 'Left' deputies—Socialist-Revolutionaries, Trudoviks, and Popular Socialists—have brought with them from their localities also 'showed clearly' on a nation-wide scale that the 'people' are at present steeped in Cadet 'constitutional illusions' to a considerable degree, that the 'people' place excessive hopes on the independent activities of the Duma, that they are excessively concerned with 'saving' the Duma. That is the obvious fact that the *Nashe Ekho* writers failed to notice. They did notice *whom* the people sent to the Duma, but not *what* they were sent there *for*. But in that case, will *Nashe Ekho* not agree that, in proposing that the proletariat ignore 'nation-wide' tasks, it is proposing that it isolate itself, not only from bourgeois 'society', but also from the petty-bourgeois 'people'?"

This is an extremely instructive and noteworthy tirade, which conceals three major opportunist errors; first, the results of the elections are contrasted with the mood of the deputies, which is substituting the deputies' mood for that of the people, and reverting from the more profound, extensive and basic to the shallower, narrower and derivative.* Secondly, the question of a firm and sustained political line and tactics for the proletariat is replaced by the question of an assessment of some "mood" or another. Thirdly—and *this is most important*—for the sake of the vulgarly democratic fetish of a "nation-wide revolution", the proletariat is scared with the bogey of "*isolation*" from the "petty bourgeois people".

We shall deal with the first two errors as briefly as possible. The elections affected the masses, and showed, not only their fleeting mood but their *profound interests*. It is alto-

* As far as "mandates" are concerned we reject that argument completely. Who makes a count of revolutionary and opportunist instructions and mandates? Who does not know how many newspapers have been suppressed for publishing revolutionary instruction?

gether unworthy of Marxists to revert from class interests (expressed by the party grouping at the elections) to a fleeting mood. The mood of the deputies may be one of gloom, while the economic interests of the masses may call forth a mass struggle. An assessment of "mood", therefore, may be necessary to determine *the moment* for some action, step, appeal, etc., but certainly not to determine proletarian *tactics*. To argue differently would mean replacing sustained proletarian tactics by unprincipled dependence on "mood". And all the time, the point at issue was that of *a line* and had nothing to do with a "moment". Whether or not the proletariat has at present recovered (and *Narodnaya Gazeta* does not think so) is of importance in deciding *the* "*moment*" *for action*, but not in determining the tactical *line of action* of the working class.

The third error is the most profound and the most important—the fear of "isolating" the Social-Democrats or the proletariat (which is the same thing) from the petty-bourgeois people. That is really a most improper fear.

Social-Democracy *must* isolate itself from the petty-bourgeois people inasmuch as the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Trudoviks and Popular Socialists are really trailing along in the wake of the Constitutional-Democrats—and that is happening—and indeed has happened very frequently beginning with the voting for Golovin, and continuing with the famous tactics of sepulchral silence, etc. For there must be one of two things; either the vacillation of the petty bourgeoisie is, in general, an indication of the shaky nature of the petty bourgeois, and the difficult and arduous development of the revolution, but does not signify that it has ended or that its forces are exhausted (which is our opinion). Then, by isolating itself from all and every vacillation and wavering in petty-bourgeois people, the Social-Democratic proletariat *educates* them for the struggle, trains them in preparation for the struggle and develops their political consciousness, determination, firmness, etc. Or else, the wavering of the petty-bourgeois people means the finale of the present bourgeois revolution (we believe such a view to be *wrong*, and none of the Social-Democrats have directly and openly defended it, although extreme Right-wing Social-Democrats are undoubtedly inclined to do so). Then,

again, the Social-Democratic proletariat *must also* isolate itself from the wavering (or treachery) of the petty bourgeoisie, in order to educate the working-class masses in class-consciousness, and prepare them for a more planned, firm and decisive participation in the next revolution.

In both cases and in all cases, the Social-Democratic proletariat must isolate itself from the petty-bourgeois people, *which is steeped in Cadet illusions*, and do so unconditionally. The proletariat must in all cases pursue the firm, sustained policy of a truly revolutionary class, without allowing itself to be flustered by any reactionary or philistine cock-and-bull stories, whether these are about nation-wide tasks in general, or about a nation-wide revolution.

It is possible that, given a certain combination of forces or a concurrence of unfavourable conditions, the overwhelming part of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois strata may be infected, for the time being, with servility, slavishness or cowardice. That would be "nation-wide" cowardice, and the Social-Democratic proletariat *isolates* itself from it in the interests of the working-class movement as a whole.

Proletary, No. 16,
May 2, 1907

Published according
to the *Proletary* text

CONTRA EL BOICOT (1)

(NOTAS DE UN PUBLICISTA SOCIALDEMÓCRATA)

La segunda Duma estaba condenada desde su nacimiento: la nobleza y la burocracia reclamaban su disolución, la derogación de la ley 11 de diciembre de 1905 y el retorno al régimen del 6 de agosto (1905 - Duma de Buliguin) con un parlamento consultivo. Durante toda la legislatura no cesaron de correr rumores siniestros sobre la suerte de la "constitución".

Sin embargo, la Duma no ofrecía blanco a las acusaciones. Incluso el grupo socialdemócrata, en su mayoría compuesto de mencheviques, daba pruebas de conciliación. El partido cadete, que vivía en la angustia de la disolución próxima, no tenía más que una política: aplazar todas las cuestiones candentes para confinarse en el estudio de proyectos de leyes y de reformas de detalle. Pero cuanto más se hacía acomodaticio, tanto más la derecha le planteaba, insolentemente y en todas las formas, su dilema: ¿estáis por la revolución o por el orden? En fin, el 1 de junio el gobierno exigió que la Duma excluyese a los 55 miembros de la fracción socialdemócrata y autorizase la detención de 16 de entre ellos, acusados de hacer propaganda en el ejército. La mayoría no se negó, pero pasó el asunto a una comisión. Ya se había encontrado la ocasión buscada: el 3 de junio la Duma era declarada disuelta. Al mismo tiempo se publicaba una nueva ley electoral que disminuía ligeramente el número total de diputados, pero reducía a la mitad aproximadamente el de los representantes obreros y campesinos, en beneficio del grupo de los grandes propietarios.

Era el triunfo completo de la reacción. La ley del 3 de junio fué considerada casi por todas partes como un verdadero golpe de Estado. La nueva ley electoral pri-

(1) Obras completas, primera edición rusa, t. VIII, páginas 449-456.

veba de representación a la mayor parte de la Rusia asiática, reducía de 105 a 32 el número de puestos concedidos a la Siberia, al Asia Central, al Cáucaso y a Polonia, ahogaba a las grandes ciudades en las asambleas comunes de las provincias, dividía a los habitantes de las ciudades en dos grupos, ricos y pobres, etc. En la Rusia europea, el número de "electores" obreros (que elegían los diputados a la Duma) era reducido de 208 a 112, el de los electores campesinos era disminuido en un 56 %. Por el contrario, el grupo de los propietarios agrarios era aumentado en un tercio. Así estaba asegurada una mayoría aplastante en las asambleas provinciales, formadas por estos "electores", a los grandes propietarios y a la gran burguesía, y era casi imposible hacer elegir candidatos socialdemócratas.

En estas condiciones, se planteaba la cuestión: ¿vale la pena de tomar parte en una campaña electoral que promete tan poco? De aquí la reaparición, con una fuerza acrecida, de las tendencias boicotistas que se habían manifestado cuando las elecciones a la primera Duma.

La primera resolución invitando a boicotear la próxima Duma, convocada para el 1.° de noviembre de 1907, fué presentada en un Congreso de maestros celebrado en Finlandia a fines de junio: los socialdemócratas, como no tenían ninguna decisión de su partido, se abstuvieron; los socialistas-revolucionarios votaron en pro, a causa de la imposibilidad de participar en una falsificación manifiesta "de la voluntad popular en beneficio exclusivo de los elementos más reaccionarios y más privilegiados".

La tentación para emprender esta vía era fuerte: por ello, Lenin escribió en seguida un extenso artículo intitulado "Contra el boicot", en el cual vuelve a estudiar en detalle la cuestión.

En las tres primeras partes se consagra a demostrar que del carácter ultrarreaccionario de la tercera Duma no se deduce de ninguna manera la necesidad del boicot. Es preciso analizar, utilizando la experiencia del pasado, las condiciones históricas en las cuales esta arma es utilizable. Así, el boicot de la Duma Buliguin ha sido un éxito completo. ¿Cuáles eran las circunstancias en dicha época? 1.° La Duma, es decir, la monarquía constitucional no existía todavía; el hecho existente era la lucha revolucionaria directa; la cuestión

Históricamente planteada era: ¿llevará el antiguo régimen la revolución por la vía de la monarquía constitucional, o bien la llevará el pueblo, por el contrario, por la vía de la acción directa? El boicot era una manera de plantear esta cuestión, en un momento en que el partido obrero debía luchar por la vía revolucionaria directa contra la vía en "zig-zags" de la Duma. La cuestión fué resuelta primero en el segundo sentido, el del pueblo, con los Soviets; después en el primero, por el poder, victorioso sobre la insurrección de diciembre. 2.° Se estaba en presencia de un desenvolvimiento revolucionario particularmente extenso, potente y rápido. Esta condición es necesaria, pues el boicot activo es una negativa a reconocer el régimen existente, es decir, es la primera etapa de la insurrección. 3.° El boicot tenía por objeto específico combatir las ilusiones constitucionales, entonces tan difundidas y tan arraigadas.

Lenin termina su artículo refutando un último argumento en favor del boicot: la previsión de un nuevo movimiento obrero anunciado por la huelga general de la industria textil en preparación. El boicot, dice, podrá ser necesario más tarde, pero, por el momento, no favorece en nada al movimiento futuro. Lo esencial es, al mismo tiempo que nos preparamos para las elecciones, hacer comprender bien al pueblo que sólo una lucha directa y general le liberará de las vejaciones de todas suertes sufridas después de la derrota de diciembre.

La discusión así abierta en la fracción bolchevista se prolongó durante los meses de junio y julio de 1907. La mayor parte de los militantes, incluso organizaciones enteras, estaban en pro del boicot. Kamenev en particular escribió un artículo en este sentido. En los últimos días de julio, los dos artículos, el de Lenin y el de Kamenev, fueron reunidos en un folleto bajo el título: "N. Lenin y G. K.-ev. Por y contra el boicot".

Precisamente en ese momento (21-23 de julio) se reunía en Viborg, en Finlandia, una conferencia nacional del partido socialdemócrata para decidir sobre la táctica electoral. Entre los bolcheviques, Lenin fué el único que se pronunció por la participación en las elecciones, pero esta solución triunfó gracias a los votos de los mencheviques, del Bund y de los polacos.

. . . . . .

IV

Las condiciones de la aplicación del boicot deben, pues, buscarse en la situación de hecho del momento. Si se compara desde este punto de vista el otoño de 1907 con el de 1905 (1) se llega forzosamente a la conclusión de que no hay lugar a proclamar actualmente el boicot. En lo que concierne a la relación entre la vía revolucionaria directa y el "zig-zag" de la monarquía constitucional, en lo que concierne al despertar de las masas y al objetivo específico de la lucha contra las ilusiones constitucionales, la situación presente es muy notablemente diferente de la de hace dos años.

En aquel momento, la orientación de la historia hacia la monarquía constitucional no era más que una maniobra policíaca. Hoy este "viraje" es un hecho consumado. Negarse a reconocerlo sería el efecto de un miedo ridículo a la verdad. Pero sería un error deducir de ello que la revolución está terminada (2). No tenemos todavía ningún dato que nos permita hacer semejante deducción.

El marxista está obligado a luchar por la vía revolucionaria directa cuando esta vía está señalada por la situación objetiva, pero, lo repetimos, esto no quiere decir que no debamos contar con la vía en zig-zags que hemos emprendido ya efectivamente. Desde este punto de vista, la marcha de la revolución rusa está ya com-

(1) Después de la ley del 6 de agosto cuando se abrió la discusión a propósito de la futura Duma (llamada de Buliguín).

(2) Más tarde, en la conferencia de Viborg, los partidarios del boicot decían en su resolución que «la participación en las elecciones se ha comprendida por las masas como la confesión de que la revolución estaba terminada y de que no quedaba otra solución que consagrarse por largos años al trabajo cotidiano». Lenin, en el transcurso de todo este artículo, repite que la revolución es posible incluso por la vía de la monarquía constitucional.

AGAINST BOYCOTT

NOTES OF A SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PUBLICIST[1]

Written on June 26 (July 9), 1907

Published in 1907 in the pamphlet *Concerning the Boycott of the Third Duma*, Moscow
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the pamphlet text

of constitutional illusions, is also necessary at the end of this period? That would be a "bright idea" in the vein of "analogical sociology" and not a serious conclusion. Boycott *cannot* now have the *same* meaning that it had at the beginning of the Russian revolution. Today we can neither warn the people against constitutional illusions nor fight to prevent the revolution from being turned into the constitutional-monarchist blind alley. Boycott cannot have its former vital spark. If there should be a boycott, it will in any case have a *different* significance, it will be filled in any case with a *different* political content.

Moreover, our analysis of the historical peculiarity of the boycott provides one consideration against a boycott of the Third Duma. In the period at the beginning of the constitutional turn the attention of the whole nation was inevitably focused on the Duma. By means of the boycott we fought and were bound to fight against this focusing of attention on the trend towards the blind alley, to fight against an infatuation that was due to ignorance, unenlightenment, weakness, or selfish counter-revolutionary activity. Today not only any nation-wide, but even any at all widespread enthusiasm for the Duma in general or for the Third Duma in particular is completely ruled out. There is no need for any boycott here.

IV

And so the conditions for the applicability of a boycott should be sought, undoubtedly, in the objective state of affairs at the given moment. Comparing, from this point of view, the autumn of 1907 with that of 1905, we cannot help coming to the conclusion that we have no grounds *today* for proclaiming a boycott. From the standpoint of the relation between the direct revolutionary path and the constitutional-monarchist "zigzag", from the standpoint of mass upswing, and from the standpoint of the specific aims of the fight against constitutional illusions, the present state of affairs differs sharply from that of two years ago.

At that time the monarchist-constitutional turn of history was nothing more than a police promise. Now it is

a fact. Not to acknowledge this fact would be a ridiculous fear of the truth. And it would be a mistake to infer from the acknowledgement of this fact that the Russian revolution is over. No, there are no grounds whatever for drawing such a conclusion. A Marxist is bound to fight for the direct revolutionary path of development when such a fight is prescribed by the objective state of affairs, but this, we repeat, does not mean that we do not have to reckon with the zigzag turn which has in fact already taken definite shape. In this respect the course of the Russian revolution has already become quite definite. At the beginning of the revolution we see a line of short, but extraordinarily broad and amazingly rapid upswing. Next we have a line of extremely slow but steady decline, beginning with the December uprising of 1905. First a period of direct revolutionary struggle by the masses, then a period of monarchist-constitutional turn.

Does this mean that this latter turn is a final one? That the revolution is over and a "constitutional" period has set in? That there are no grounds either for expecting a new upswing or for *preparing* for it? That the republican character of our programme must be scrapped?

Not at all. Only liberal vulgarians like our Cadets, who are ready to use any argument to justify servility and toadyism, can draw such conclusions. No, it only means that in upholding, at all points, the *whole* of our programme and *all* our revolutionary views, we must bring our direct appeals into line with the objective state of affairs at the given moment. While proclaiming the inevitability of revolution, while systematically and steadily accumulating inflammatory material in every way, while, for this purpose, carefully guarding the revolutionary traditions of our revolution's best epoch, cultivating them and purging them of liberal parasites, we nevertheless do not refuse to do the humdrum daily work on the humdrum monarchist-constitutional turn. That is all. We must work for a new, broad upswing, but we have no ground whatever for butting in blindly with the slogan of boycott.

As we have said, the only boycott that can have any meaning in Russia at the present time is *active* boycott. This implies not passively avoiding participation in the

elections, but ignoring the elections for the sake of the aim of a direct assault. The boycott, in this sense, inevitably amounts to a *call* for the most energetic and decisive offensive. Does such a broad and general upswing exist at the present moment, an upswing without which such a call would be meaningless? Of course not.

Generally speaking, as far as "calls" are concerned, the difference in this respect between the present state of affairs and that of the autumn of 1905 is a very striking one. At that time, as we have already pointed out, there were no calls throughout the previous year to which the masses would not have responded. The impetus of the mass offensive took place in advance of the calls of the organisations. Now we are at a period of a lull in the revolution when *a whole series of calls* systematically *met with no response among the masses*. That is what happened with the call to sweep away the Witte Duma (at the beginning of 1906), with the call for an uprising after the dissolution of the First Duma (in the summer of 1906), *with the call for struggle* in answer to the dissolution of the Second Duma and the coup d'état of June 3, 1907. Take the leaflet of our Central Committee on these last acts.[15] You will find there a direct call to struggle in the form possible under local conditions (demonstrations, strikes, and an open struggle against the armed force of absolutism). It was a verbal appeal. The mutinies of June 1907 in Kiev and the Black Sea Fleet were calls through action. Neither of these calls evoked a mass response. If the most striking and direct manifestations of reactionary assault upon the revolution—the dissolution of the two Dumas and the coup d'état—evoked no upswing at the time, what ground is there for immediately repeating the call in the form of proclaiming a boycott? Is it not clear that the objective state of affairs is such that the "proclamation" is in danger of being just an empty shout? When the struggle is on, when it is spreading, growing, coming up from all sides, then such a "proclamation" is legitimate and necessary; then it is the duty of the revolutionary proletariat to sound such a war-cry. But it is impossible to invent that struggle or to call it into being merely by a war-cry. And when a whole series of fighting calls, tested by us on more direct occasions, has proved to be una-

vailing, it is only natural that we should seek to have serious grounds for "proclaiming" a slogan which is meaningless unless the conditions exist which make fighting calls feasible.

If anyone wants to persuade the *Social-Democratic* proletariat that the slogan of boycott is a correct one, he must not allow himself to be carried away by the mere sound of words that in their time played a great and glorious revolutionary role. He must weigh the objective conditions for applying such a slogan and realise that to launch it assumes indirectly the existence of conditions making for a sweeping, universal, powerful, and rapid revolutionary upswing. But in periods such as we are now living in, in periods of a temporary lull in the revolution, such a condition can in no circumstances be indirectly assumed. It must be directly and distinctly realised and made clear both to oneself and to the whole working class. Otherwise one runs the risk of finding oneself in the position of a person who uses big words without understanding their true meaning or who hesitates to speak plainly and call a spade a spade.

V

The boycott is one of the finest revolutionary traditions of the most eventful and heroic period of the Russian revolution. We said above that it is one of our tasks to carefully guard these traditions in general, to cultivate them, and to purge them of liberal (and opportunist) parasites. We must dwell a little on the analysis of this task in order correctly to define what it implies and to avoid misinterpretations and misunderstandings that might easily arise.

Marxism differs from all other socialist theories in the remarkable way it combines complete scientific sobriety in the analysis of the objective state of affairs and the objective course of evolution with the most emphatic recognition of the importance of the revolutionary energy, revolutionary creative genius, and revolutionary initiative of the masses—and also, of course, of individuals, groups, organisations, and parties that are able to discover and achieve contact with one or another class. A high apprais-

al of the revolutionary periods in the development of humanity follows logically from the totality of Marx's views on history. It is in such periods that the numerous contradictions which slowly accumulate during periods of so-called peaceful development become resolved. It is in such periods that the direct role of the different classes in determining the forms of social life is manifested with the greatest force, and that the foundations are laid for the political "superstructure", which then persists for a long time on the basis of the new relations of production. And, unlike the theoreticians of the liberal bourgeoisie, Marx did not regard these periods as deviations from the "normal" path, as manifestations of "social disease", as the deplorable results of excesses and mistakes, but as the most vital, the most important, essential, and decisive moments in the history of human societies. In the activities of Marx and Engels themselves, the period of their participation in the mass revolutionary struggle of 1848-49 stands out as the central point. This was their point of departure when determining the future pattern of the workers' movement and democracy in different countries. It was to this point that they always returned in order to determine the essential nature of the different classes and their tendencies in the most striking and purest form. It was from the standpoint of the revolutionary period of that time that they always judged the later, lesser, political formations and organisations, political aims and political conflicts. No wonder the ideological leaders of liberalism, men like Sombart, whole-heartedly hate this feature of Marx's activities and writings and ascribe it to the "bitterness of an exile". It is indeed typical of the bugs of police-ridden bourgeois university science to ascribe an inseparable component of Marx's and Engels's revolutionary outlook to personal bitterness, to the personal hardships of life in exile!

In one of his letters, I think it was to Kugelmann, Marx in passing threw out a highly characteristic remark, which is particularly interesting in the light of the question we are discussing. He says that the reaction in Germany had almost succeeded in blotting out the memory and traditions of the revolutionary epoch of 1848 from the minds of the people.[16] Here we have the aims of reaction and the aims

of the party of the proletariat in relation to the revolutionary traditions of a given country strikingly contrasted. The aim of reaction is to blot out these traditions, to represent the revolution as "elemental madness"—Struve's translation of the German *das tolle Jahr* ("the mad year"—the term applied by the German police-minded bourgeois historians, and even more widely by German university-professorial historiography, to the year 1848). The aim of reaction is to make the people forget the forms of struggle, the forms of organisation, and the ideas and slogans which the revolutionary period begot in such profusion and variety. Just as those obtuse eulogists of English philistinism, the Webbs, try to represent Chartism, the revolutionary period of the English labour movement, as pure childishness, as "sowing wild oats", as a piece of naïveté unworthy of serious attention, as an accidental and abnormal deviation, so too the German bourgeois historians treat the year 1848 in Germany. Such also is the attitude of the reactionaries to the Great French Revolution, which, by the fierce hatred it still inspires, demonstrates to this day the vitality and force of its influence on humanity. And in the same way our heroes of counter-revolution, particularly "democrats" of yesterday like Struve, Milyukov, Kiesewetter, and *tutti quanti* vie with one another in scurrilously slandering the revolutionary traditions of the Russian revolution. Although it is barely two years since the direct mass struggle of the proletariat won that particle of freedom which sends the liberal lackeys of the old regime into such raptures, a vast trend calling itself *liberal* (!!) has already arisen in our publicist literature. This trend is fostered by the Cadet press and is wholly devoted to depicting our revolution, revolutionary methods of struggle, revolutionary slogans, and revolutionary traditions as something base, primitive, naïve, elemental, mad, etc. ... even criminal ... from Milyukov to Kamyshansky *il n'y a qu'un pas*!* On the other hand, the successes of reaction, which first drove the people from the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies into the Dubasov-Stolypin Dumas, and is now

* There is only one step.—*Ed.*

driving it into the Octobrist Duma, are depicted by the heroes of Russian liberalism as "the process of growth of *constitutional* consciousness in Russia".

It is undoubtedly the duty of Russian Social-Democrats to study our revolution most carefully and thoroughly, to acquaint the masses with its forms of struggle, forms of organisation, etc., to strengthen the revolutionary traditions among the people, to convince the masses that improvements of any importance and permanence can be achieved solely and exclusively through revolutionary struggle, and to systematically expose the utter baseness of those smug liberals who pollute the social atmosphere with the miasma of "constitutional" servility, treachery, and Molchalinism. In the history of the struggle for liberty a single day of the October strike or of the December uprising is a hundred times more significant than months of Cadet flunkey speeches in the Duma on the subject of the blameless monarch and constitutional monarchy. We must see to it—for if we do not no one else will—that the people know much more thoroughly and in more detail those spirited, eventful, and momentous days than those months of "constitutional" asphyxia and Balalaikin-Molchalin[17] prosperity so zealously announced to the world by our liberal-party and non-party "democratic" (ugh! ugh!) press with the amiable acquiescence of Stolypin and his retinue of gendarme censors.

There is no doubt that, in many cases, sympathy for the boycott is created precisely by these praiseworthy efforts of revolutionaries to foster tradition of the finest period of the revolutionary past, to light up the cheerless slough of the drab workaday present by a spark of bold, open, and resolute struggle. But it is just because we cherish this concern for revolutionary traditions that we must vigorously protest against the view that by using one of the slogans of a particular historical period the essential conditions of that period can be restored. It is one thing to preserve the traditions of the revolution, to know how to use them for constant propaganda and agitation and for acquainting the masses with the conditions of a direct and aggressive struggle against the old regime, but quite another thing to repeat a slogan divorced from the sum total of the

conditions which gave rise to it and which ensured its success and to apply it to essentially different conditions.

Marx himself, who so highly valued revolutionary traditions and unsparingly castigated a renegade or philistine attitude towards them, at the same time demanded that revolutionaries should be able to *think*, should be able to *analyse* the conditions under which old methods of struggle could be used, and not simply to repeat certain slogans. The "national" traditions of 1792 in France will perhaps forever remain a *model* of certain revolutionary methods of struggle; but this did not prevent Marx in 1870 in the famous Address of the International from warning the French proletariat against the mistake of applying those traditions to the conditions of a different period.[18]

This holds good for Russia as well. We must study the conditions for the application of the boycott; we must instil in the masses the idea that the boycott is a quite legitimate and sometimes essential method at moments when the revolution is on the upswing (whatever the pedants who take the name of Marx in vain may say). But whether revolution is really on the upswing—and this is the fundamental condition for proclaiming a boycott—is a question which one must be able to raise independently and to decide on the basis of a serious analysis of the facts. It is our duty to prepare the way for such an upswing, as far as it lies within our power, and not to reject the boycott at the proper moment; but to regard the boycott slogan as being generally applicable to every bad or very bad representative institution would be an absolute mistake.

Take the reasoning that was used to defend and support the boycott in the "days of freedom", and you will see at once that it is impossible simply to apply such arguments to present-day conditions.

When advocating the boycott in 1905 and the beginning of 1906 we said that participation in the elections would tend to lower the temper, to surrender the position to the enemy, to lead the revolutionary people astray, to make it easier for tsarism to come to an agreement with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, and so on. What was the fundamental premise underlying these arguments, a premise not always specified but always assumed as something

which *in those days* was self-evident. This premise was the rich revolutionary energy of the masses, which sought and found *direct* outlets apart from any "constitutional" channels. This premise was the continuous *offensive* of the revolution against reaction, an offensive which it would have been criminal to weaken by occupying and defending a position that was deliberately yielded up by the enemy in order to weaken the general assault. Try to repeat these arguments *apart from* the conditions of this fundamental premise and you will immediately feel that all your "music" is off-key, that your fundamental tone is false.

It would be just as hopeless to attempt to justify the boycott by drawing a distinction between the Second and the Third Dumas. To regard the difference between the Cadets (who in the Second Duma completely betrayed the people to the Black Hundreds[19]) and the Octobrists[20] as a serious and fundamental difference, to attach any real significance to the notorious "constitution" which was torn up by the coup d'état of June 3, is something that in general corresponds much more to the spirit of vulgar democracy than that of revolutionary Social-Democracy. We have always said, maintained, and repeated that the "constitution" of the First and Second Dumas was only an illusion, that the Cadets' talk was only a blind to screen their Octobrist nature, and that the Duma was a totally unsuitable instrument for satisfying the demands of the proletariat and the peasantry. For us June 3, 1907 is a natural and inevitable result of the defeat of December 1905. We were never "captivated" by the charms of the "Duma" constitution, and so we cannot be greatly disappointed by the transition from reaction embellished and glossed over by Rodichev's phrase-mongering to naked, open, and crude reaction. The latter may even be a more effective means of sobering the ranting liberal simpletons or the sections of the population they have led astray....

Compare the Menshevik Stockholm resolution with the Bolshevik London resolution on the State Duma. You will find that the former is pompous, wordy, full of high-flown phrases about the significance of the Duma and puffed up by a sense of the grandeur of work in the Duma. The latter is simple, concise, sober, and modest. The first resolution

is imbued with a spirit of philistine jubilation over the marriage of Social-Democracy and constitutionalism ("the new power from the midst of the people", and so on and so forth in this same spirit of official falsehood). The second resolution can be paraphrased approximately as follows: since the accursed counter-revolution has driven us into this accursed pigsty, we shall work there too for the benefit of the revolution, without whining, but also without boasting.

By defending the Duma against boycott when we were still in the period of direct revolutionary struggle, the Mensheviks, so to speak, gave their pledge to the people that the Duma would be something in the nature of a weapon of revolution. And they completely failed to honour this pledge. But if we Bolsheviks gave any pledge at all, it was only by our assurance that the Duma was the spawn of counter-revolution and that no real good could be expected from it. Our view has been borne out splendidly so far, and it can safely be said that it will be borne out by future events as well. Unless the October-December strategy is "corrected" and repeated on the basis of the new data, there will never be freedom in Russia.

Therefore, when I am told that the Third Duma cannot be utilised as the Second Duma was, that the masses cannot be made to understand that it is necessary to take part in it, I would reply: if by "utilise" is meant some Menshevik bombast about it being a weapon of the revolution, etc., then it certainly cannot. But then even the first two Dumas proved in fact to be only steps to the Octobrist Duma, yet we utilised them for the simple and modest* purpose (propaganda and agitation, criticism and explaining to the masses what is taking place) for which we shall always

---

* Cf. the article in *Proletary* (Geneva), 1905,[21] "The Boycott of the Bulygin Duma" (see present edition, Vol. 9, pp. 179-87.—*Ed.*) where it was pointed out that we do not renounce the use of the Duma generally, but that we are *now* dealing with another issue confronting us, namely, that of fighting for a direct revolutionary path. See also the article in *Proletary* (Russian issue), 1906,[22] No. 1, "The Boycott" (see present edition, Vol. 11, pp. 141-49.—*Ed.*), where stress is laid on the *modest* extent of the benefits to be derived from work in the Duma.

contrive to utilise even the worst representative institutions. A speech in the Duma will not cause any "revolution", and propaganda *in connection with the Duma* is not distinguished by any particular merits; but the advantage that Social-Democracy can derive from the one and the other is not less, and sometimes even greater, than that derived from a printed speech or a speech delivered at some other gathering.

And we must explain to the masses our participation in the Octobrist Duma just as simply. Owing to the defeat of December 1905 and the failure of the attempts of 1906-07 to "repair" this defeat, reaction inevitably drove us and *will continue to drive* us constantly into worse and worse quasi-constitutional institutions. Always and everywhere we shall uphold our convictions and advocate our views, always insisting that no good can be expected as long as the old regime remains, as long as it is not wholly eradicated. We shall prepare the conditions for a new upswing, and until it takes place, and in order that it may take place, we shall work still harder and not launch slogans which have meaning only when the revolution is on the upswing.

It would be just as wrong to regard the boycott as a *line of tactics* counterposing the proletariat and part of the revolutionary bourgeois democracy to liberalism and reaction. The boycott is not a line of tactics, but a special means of struggle suitable under special conditions. To confuse Bolshevism with "boycottism" would be as bad as confusing it with "boyevism".[22a] The difference between the Bolshevik and Menshevik *lines of tactics* is now quite clear and has taken shape in the fundamentally different resolutions adopted in the spring of 1905 at the Bolshevik Third Congress in London and the Menshevik Conference in Geneva. There was no talk then either of boycott or of "boyevism", nor could there have been. As everyone knows, our *line of tactics* differed essentially from the Menshevik line both in the elections to the Second Duma, when we were not boycottists, and in the Second Duma itself. The *lines of tactics* diverge in every field of the struggle whatever its means and methods may be, without any special methods of struggle peculiar to either line being created. And

if a boycott of the Third Duma were to be justified or caused by the collapse of *revolutionary* expectations in regard to *the First or the Second Dumas*, by the collapse of a "lawful", "strong", "stable", and "genuine" constitution, it would be Menshevism of the worst kind.

VI

We have left an examination of the strongest and the only Marxist arguments in favour of a boycott to the last. Active boycott has no meaning apart from a broad revolutionary upswing. Granted. But a broad upswing evolves from one that is not broad. Signs of a certain upswing are in evidence. The boycott slogan ought to be launched by us, since that slogan supports, develops, and expands the incipient upswing.

Such, in my opinion, is the *basic* argument which, in a more or less clear form, determines the tendency towards boycott among Social-Democrats. Moreover, the comrades who stand closest to direct proletarian work proceed not from any argumentation "constructed" according to a certain type, but from a sum total of impressions derived from their contact with the working-class masses.

One of the few questions on which so far it seems there are not, or were not, disagreements between the two factions of the Social-Democrats, is that of the reason for the protracted lull in the development of our revolution. "The proletariat has not recovered"—that is the reason. Indeed, the brunt of the October-December struggle was borne by the proletariat *alone*. The proletariat alone fought in a systematic, organised, and unremitting way for the whole nation. No wonder that in a country with the smallest percentage of proletarian population (by European standards), the proletariat should have found itself utterly exhausted by such a struggle. Besides, ever since December the combined forces of governmental and bourgeois reaction have been striking their hardest all the time at the proletariat. Police persecutions and executions have decimated the ranks of the proletariat in the course of eighteen months, while systematic lock-outs, beginning with

the "punitive" closing down of state-owned factories and ending with capitalist conspiracies against the workers, have increased poverty among the mass of the working class to an unprecedented extent. And now, some Social-Democratic functionaries say, there are signs of a rising challenge among the masses, a mustering of strength by the proletariat. This rather vague and indefinite impression is supported by a stronger argument, namely, indubitable evidence of a business revival in certain branches of industry. The growing demand for workers should inevitably intensify the strike movement. The workers will be bound to attempt to make up for at least some of the tremendous losses they sustained in the period of repression and lock-outs. Finally, the third and most powerful argument is the one that points not to a problematical or generally expected strike movement, but to a single great strike already decided upon by the workers' organisations. At the beginning of 1907, the representatives of 10,000 textile workers discussed their position and outlined steps for strengthening the trade unions in that industry. The delegates have met again, this time representing 20,000 workers, and they resolved to call a *general strike* of the textile workers in July 1907. This movement may involve up to 400,000 workers. It originates in the Moscow region, i.e., the biggest centre of the labour movement in Russia and the biggest trade and industrial centre. It is in Moscow, and only in Moscow, that the mass workers' movement is most likely to develop into a wide popular movement of decisive political importance. As for the textile workers, they are the worst paid and least developed element of the total of the working class, who participated least of all in previous movements and who have the closest connections with the peasantry. The initiative of such workers may be an indication that the movement will embrace much wider strata of the proletariat than before. As regards the connection between the strike movement and the revolutionary upswing of the masses, this has already been demonstrated repeatedly in the history of the Russian revolution.

It is the bounden duty of the Social-Democrats to concentrate supreme attention and special efforts on this move-

ment. Work in this field should certainly be given precedence over the elections to the Octobrist Duma. The masses should be made to see the necessity of converting this strike movement into a general and broad attack on the autocracy. That is just what the boycott slogan means—a shifting of attention from the Duma to the direct mass struggle. The boycott slogan means imbuing the new movement with a political and revolutionary content.

Such, roughly, is the train of thought which has led certain Social-Democrats to the conviction that the Third Duma must be boycotted. This argument in favour of the boycott is undoubtedly a Marxist one, and has nothing in common with the bare repetition of a slogan dissociated from specific historical conditions.

But strong as this argument is, it is not enough, in my opinion, to make us accept the boycott slogan *straightaway*. This argument emphasises what no Russian Social-Democrat who ponders the lessons of our revolution should have any doubts about, namely, that we cannot renounce boycott, that we must be prepared to put that slogan forward at the proper time, and that our way of stating the boycott issue has nothing in common with the liberal, wretchedly philistine way—to keep clear of it or not to keep clear of it?*—which is devoid of all revolutionary content.

Let us take it for granted that everything the Social-Democratic adherents of the boycott say about the changed temper of the workers, about the industrial revival, and about the July strike of the textile workers is wholly in accord with the facts.

What follows from all this? We have before us the beginning of a partial upswing of revolutionary import.**

---

* See *Tovarishch* for a specimen of *liberal* argumentation by L. Martov, a former contributor to Social-Democratic publications and now a contributor to liberal newspapers.

** Some hold that the textile strike is a movement of a new type which sets the trade-union movement apart from the revolutionary movement. But we pass over this view, first because to read a pessimistic meaning into all symptoms of phenomena of a complex type is generally a dangerous practice which often muddles many Social-Democrats who are not quite "firm in the saddle". Secondly, if the textile strike was found to have these characteristics we Social-Democrats would have to fight against them in the most energetic man-

Must we make every effort to support and develop it, and try to convert it into a general revolutionary upswing, and then into a movement of an aggressive type? Undoubtedly. There can be no two opinions about this among the Social-Democrats (except, perhaps, those contributing to *Tovarishch*). But do we need the boycott slogan for developing the movement *at this very moment*, at the beginning of this partial upswing, before it has definitely passed into a general upswing? Is this slogan capable of promoting the movement today? This is a different question, one which, in our opinion, would have to be answered in the negative.

A general upswing can and should be developed from a partial upswing by direct and immediate arguments and slogans without any relation to the Third Duma. The entire course of events after December fully confirms the Social-Democratic view on the role of the monarchist constitution, on the necessity of direct struggle. Citizens, we shall say, if you do not want to see the cause of democracy in Russia going steadily faster and faster downhill as it did after December 1905 during the hegemony of the Cadet gentlemen over the democratic movement, then support the incipient workers' movement, support the direct mass struggle. Without it there can be no guarantee of freedom in Russia.

Agitation of this type would undoubtedly be a perfectly consistent revolutionary-Social-Democratic agitation. Would we necessarily have to add to it: Don't believe in the Third Duma, citizens, and look at us, Social-Democrats, who are boycotting it as proof of our protest!

Such an addition under prevailing conditions is not only unnecessary, but sounds rather odd, sounds almost like mockery. In any case, no one believes in the Third Duma, i.e., among the strata of the population that are capable of sustaining the democratic movement there is not and cannot be any of that enthusiasm for the constitutional institution of the Third Duma that undoubtedly existed among the public at large for the *First* Duma, for the *first* attempts in Russia to set up any kind of institutions provided they were *constitutional*.

---

ner. Consequently, in the event of the success of our struggle the question would be just as we have stated it.

Widespread public interest in 1905 and the beginning of 1906 was focused on the *first* representative institution, even though it was based on a monarchist constitution. That is a fact. That is what the Social-Democrats had to fight against and show up as clearly as possible.

Not so today. It is not enthusiasm for the *first* "parliament" that forms a characteristic feature of the moment, not belief in the Duma, but *unbelief in an upswing*.

Under these conditions we shall not be strengthening the movement by prematurely putting forward the boycott slogan, we shall not be paralysing the real obstacles to that movement. Moreover, by doing so we even risk weakening the force of our agitation, for the boycott is a slogan associated with an upswing that has taken definite shape, but the trouble now is that wide circles of the population do not believe in the upswing, do not see its strength.

We must first of all see to it that the strength of this upswing is demonstrated *in actual fact*, and we shall always have time afterwards to put forward the slogan which indirectly expresses that strength. Even so it is a question whether a revolutionary movement of an aggressive character requires a special slogan *diverting* attention from ... the *Third Duma*. Possibly not. In order to pass by something that is important and really capable of rousing the enthusiasm of the inexperienced crowd who have never seen a parliament before, it may be necessary to *boycott* the thing that should be passed by. But in order to pass by an institution that is absolutely incapable of rousing the enthusiasm of the democratic or semi-democratic crowd of today it is not necessary to proclaim a boycott. The crux of the matter now is not in a boycott, but in direct and immediate efforts to convert the partial upswing into a general upswing, the trade-union movement into a revolutionary movement, the defence against lock-outs into an offensive against reaction.

VII

To sum up. The boycott slogan was the product of a special historical period. In 1905 and the beginning of 1906, the objective state of affairs confronted the contending

social forces with the immediate choice between the path of direct revolution or that of a turn to a monarchist constitution. The purpose of the campaign for a boycott was mainly to combat constitutional illusions. The success of the boycott depended on a sweeping, universal, rapid, and powerful upswing of the revolution.

In all these respects the state of affairs now, towards the autumn of 1907, does not call for such a slogan and does not justify it.

While continuing our day-to-day work of preparing for the elections, and while not refusing beforehand to take part in representative institutions, however reactionary, we must direct all our propaganda and agitation towards explaining to the people the connection between the December defeat and the whole subsequent decline of liberty and desecration of the constitution. We must instil in the masses the firm conviction that unless there is a direct mass struggle such desecration will inevitably continue and grow worse.

While not renouncing the use of the boycott slogan at times of rising revolution, when the need for such a slogan may seriously arise, we must at the present moment exert every effort in an endeavour by our direct and immediate influence to convert one or another upswing of the working-class movement into a sweeping, universal, revolutionary, and aggressive movement against reaction as a whole, against its foundations.

June 26, 1907

PARTIDO OBRERO Y RELIGION (1)

El golpe de Estado del 3 de junio de 1907 marcaba una etapa histórica: el fin del periodo revolucionario. Desde entonces hasta el despertar obrero de 1912 asistimos a una reacción caracterizada en todos los dominios.

En el gobierno se encuentra un primer ministro inteligente, Stolypin, que comprende que la monarquía no puede mantenerse ya sobre sus antiguas bases feudales y trabaja por darla cimientos capitalistas. En los campos hay que crear una clase de campesinos propietarios, y por consiguiente conservadores, que será a la vez un factor de prosperidad nacional y un dique contra la revolución; en las ciudades hay que aliarse a la industria y al comercio. Sólo a este precio será posible conservar lo esencial del régimen.

La Duma tiene su plaza en este plan: seducir con una fachada constitucional a los liberales, a los intelectuales, a los capitalistas rusos y a la banca extranjera. La Duma subsiste, pues. La legislatura se abre el 1 de noviembre de 1907. Su composición garantiza una docilidad suficiente: de 437 diputados, 145 pertenecen a la derecha y a los nacionalistas; 170 son octubristas o progresistas; 78, cadetes o de los grupos nacionales; 14, laboristas; 15, sin-partido, y 15, socialdemócratas. Una asamblea semejante es para un gobierno más bien un sostén que un estorbo. Así, la Duma aprobó su programa agrario y todas las medidas, de principio o de detalle, que podían favorecer a la contrarrevolución.

El movimiento obrero decae de año en año: si en 1907 se registran todavía oficialmente 740.000 huelgas (contra 1.108.000 en 1906 y 2.863.000 en 1905), no se cuentan en 1908 más que 176.000, y en 1909 más que 64.000. El proletariado parece aplastado para mucho tiempo.

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edición rusa, t. XI, I parte, páginas 250-260.

El fracaso del movimiento revolucionario tiene una repercusión inmediata en los medios intelectuales, en los cuales la desilusión debía naturalmente suceder a un apasionamiento superficial. Se ve a escritores de talento poner a la moda la pornografía. Los espíritus más serios resucitan la filosofía idealista. Ex-socialdemócratas como Struve, Berdiaev y otros, quemando lo que habían adorado y adorando lo que habían quemado, predican el retorno a la religión, ya que no a la Iglesia establecida. En marzo de 1909 publican una recopilación intitulada Viéji (Los Jalones), que es como su profesión de fé y que marca la ruptura definitiva del liberalismo con el movimiento revolucionario. Estas tendencias no podían dejar de penetrar en el partido socialdemócrata: A. Bogdánov, miembro del Comité central, inventa el empiriomonismo; Gorki y A. Lunacharski predican una religión sin Dios, que no por eso deja de ser un serio desgarrón dado al materialismo: "Dios, escribe Lunacharski, es todo lo que hay de humano en la suprema potencia... Adoremos las energías de la humanidad".

Plejánov, en una serie de artículos, había ridiculizado vigorosamente a Bogdánov y a Lunacharski; Lenin había emprendido la refutación de las doctrinas nuevas en un libro escrito en 1908: Materialismo y empiriocriticismo. Pero la cuestión de la actitud de la socialdemocracia frente a este retoño del pensamiento religioso quedaba, no obstante, por aclarar. Así, cuando se inició en la Duma la discusión sobre el presupuesto del Santo Sínodo, el grupo parlamentario decidió intervenir y discutió seriamente por adelantado el discurso que debía pronunciar su orador, el bolchevique Surkov. El proyecto contenía un pasaje en el cual la fracción se proclamaba atea. Ciertos oradores reclamaron la supresión del mismo invocando los argumentos siguientes: una declaración tal puede perjudicar a la propaganda (un orador que hablaba contra la religión en la fábrica Putilov ha fallado poco para que lo arrojaran a la caldera); por otra parte, la socialdemocracia como tal no tiene necesidad de hacerlo; en Francia, son los radicales burgueses y los jauresistas los que colocan en primer lugar el anticlericalismo: una doctrina como el socialismo puede ser atea, pero no un partido político, sobre todo un partido de masas. Otros querían mantener la frase en cuestión: el cleri-

ateísmo se desarrolla en Rusia, emprende una gran campaña contra la socialdemocracia, es preciso que ésta determine su posición. Finalmente, la declaración de ateísmo fué suprimida pero se conservó una frase que decía que la religión es el opio del pueblo.

Lenin se había visto obligado a primeros de diciembre a abandonar su refugio de Finlandia, que ya no era seguro, para marcharse al extranjero, trasladando con él la redacción de El Proletario. Se fijó en Ginebra, donde apareció en febrero el número 21 del periódico, y más tarde en París, donde fué escrito el artículo que el lector encontrará a continuación.

∴

El discurso pronunciado por el diputado Surkov en la Duma con ocasión de la discusión del presupuesto de cultos, así como los debates a los cuales ha dado lugar en nuestro grupo parlamentario el proyecto de ese discurso, debates que publicamos más adelante, plantean una cuestión sumamente interesante y de una actualidad candente. Una gran parte de la "sociedad", los intelectuales más próximos al movimiento obrero, así como ciertos medios obreros, manifiestan un vivo interés por todo lo que se refiere a la religión (1). Por consiguiente, la socialdemocracia está obligada a exponer su punto de vista sobre la religión.

La socialdemocracia funda toda su filosofía en el socialismo científico, es decir, en el marxismo. Este reposa esencialmente, como lo han declarado frecuentemente Marx y Engels, en el materialismo dialéctico que ha continuado las tradiciones de los materialistas franceses del siglo XVIII (2) y de Feuer-

(1) Nos enteramos, por la discusión que tuvo lugar en el grupo parlamentario, que en Petersburgo había 40.000 miembros de las sectas religiosas, de los cuales una gran parte eran obreros, y que además, se había creado una nueva secta de la cual formaban parte ex-miembros del comité socialdemócrata de Petersburgo.

(2) Holbach, Lamettrie, Helvétius, Diderot, y en general los enciclopedistas. Engels recomendaba difundir sus escritos, de cuales, en

THE ATTITUDE OF THE WORKERS' PARTY TO RELIGION

Deputy Surkov's speech in the Duma during the debate on the Synod estimates, and the discussion that arose within our Duma group when it considered the draft of this speech (both printed in this issue) have raised a question which is of extreme importance and urgency at this particular moment. An interest in everything connected with religion is undoubtedly being shown today by wide circles of "society", and has penetrated into the ranks of intellectuals standing close to the working-class movement, as well as into certain circles of the workers. It is the absolute duty of Social-Democrats to make a public statement of their attitude towards religion.

Social-Democracy bases its whole world-outlook on scientific socialism, i.e., Marxism. The philosophical basis of Marxism, as Marx and Engels repeatedly declared, is dialectical materialism, which has fully taken over the historical traditions of eighteenth-century materialism in France and of Feuerbach (first half of the nineteenth century) in Germany—a materialism which is absolutely atheistic and positively hostile to all religion. Let us recall that the whole of Engels's *Anti-Dühring*, which Marx read in manuscript, is an indictment of the materialist and atheist Dühring for not being a consistent materialist and for leaving loopholes for religion and religious philosophy. Let us recall that in his essay on Ludwig Feuerbach, Engels reproaches Feuerbach for combating religion not in order to destroy it, but in order to renovate it, to invent a new, "exalted" religion, and so forth. Religion is the opium of the people—this dictum by Marx is the corner-stone of the whole Marxist outlook

on religion.[148] Marxism has always regarded all modern religions and churches, and each and every religious organisation, as instruments of bourgeois reaction that serve to defend exploitation and to befuddle the working class.

At the same time Engels frequently condemned the efforts of people who desired to be "more left" or "more revolutionary" than the Social-Democrats to introduce into the programme of the workers' party an explicit proclamation of atheism, in the sense of declaring war on religion. Commenting in 1874 on the famous manifesto of the Blanquist fugitive Communards who were living in exile in London, Engels called their vociferous proclamation of war on religion a piece of stupidity, and stated that such a declaration of war was the best way to revive interest in religion and to prevent it from really dying out. Engels blamed the Blanquists for being unable to understand that only the class struggle of the working masses could, by comprehensively drawing the widest strata of the proletariat into conscious and revolutionary social *practice*, really free the oppressed masses from the yoke of religion, whereas to proclaim that war on religion was a political task of the workers' party was just anarchistic phrase-mongering.[149] And in 1877, too, in his *Anti-Dühring*, while ruthlessly attacking the slightest concessions made by Dühring the philosopher to idealism and religion, Engels no less resolutely condemns Dühring's pseudo-revolutionary idea that religion should be prohibited in socialist society. To declare such a war on-religion, Engels says, is to "out-Bismarck Bismarck", i.e., to repeat the folly of Bismarck's struggle against the clericals (the notorious "Struggle for Culture", *Kulturkampf*, i.e., the struggle Bismarck waged in the 1870s against the German Catholic party, the "Centre" party, by means of a police persecution of Catholicism). By this struggle Bismarck only *stimulated* the militant clericalism of the Catholics, and only injured the work of real culture, because he gave prominence to religious divisions rather than political divisions, and diverted the attention of some sections of the working class and of the other democratic elements away from the urgent tasks of the class and revolutionary struggle to the most superficial and false bourgeois anti-clericalism. Accusing the would-be ultra-revolutionary Dühring of wanting to repeat Bismarck's

folly in another form, Engels insisted that the workers' party should have the ability to work patiently at the task of organising and educating the proletariat, which would lead to the dying out of religion, and not throw itself into the gamble of a political war on religion.[150] This view has become part of the very essence of German Social-Democracy, which, for example, advocated freedom for the Jesuits, their admission into Germany, and the complete abandonment of police methods of combating any particular religion. "Religion is a private matter": this celebrated point in the Erfurt Programme (1891) summed up these political tactics of Social-Democracy.

These tactics have by now become a matter of routine; they have managed to give rise to a new distortion of Marxism in the opposite direction, in the direction of opportunism. This point in the Erfurt Programme has come to be interpreted as meaning that we Social-Democrats, our Party, *consider* religion to be a private matter, that religion is a private matter for us as Social-Democrats, for us as a party. Without entering into a direct controversy with this opportunist view, Engels in the nineties deemed it necessary to oppose it resolutely in a positive, and not a polemical form. To wit: Engels did this in the form of a statement, which he deliberately underlined, that Social-Democrats regard religion as a private matter *in relation to the state*, but not in relation to themselves, not in relation to Marxism, and not in relation to the workers' party.[151]

Such is the external history of the utterances of Marx and Engels on the question of religion. To people with a slapdash attitude towards Marxism, to people who cannot or will not think, this history is a skein of meaningless Marxist contradictions and waverings, a hodge-podge of "consistent" atheism and "sops" to religion, "unprincipled" wavering between a r-r-revolutionary war on God and a cowardly desire to "play up to" religious workers, a fear of scaring them away, etc., etc. The literature of the anarchist phrasemongers contains plenty of attacks on Marxism in this vein.

But anybody who is able to treat Marxism at all seriously, to ponder over its philosophical principles and the experience of international Social-Democracy, will readily see

that the Marxist tactics in regard to religion are thoroughly consistent, and were carefully thought out by Marx and Engels; and that what dilettantes or ignoramuses regard as wavering is but a direct and inevitable deduction from dialectical materialism. It would be a profound mistake to think that the seeming "moderation" of Marxism in regard to religion is due to supposed "tactical" considerations, the desire "not to scare away" anybody, and so forth. On the contrary, in this question, too, the political line of Marxism is inseparably bound up with its philosophical principles.

Marxism is materialism. As such, it is as relentlessly hostile to religion as was the materialism of the eighteenth-century Encyclopaedists or the materialism of Feuerbach. This is beyond doubt. But the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels goes further than the Encyclopaedists and Feuerbach, for it applies the materialist philosophy to the domain of history, to the domain of the social sciences. We must combat religion—that is the ABC of *all* materialism, and consequently of Marxism. But Marxism is not a materialism which has stopped at the ABC. Marxism goes further. It says: We must *know how* to combat religion, and in order to do so we must explain the source of faith and religion among the masses *in a materialist way*. The combating of religion cannot be confined to abstract ideological preaching, and it must not be reduced to such preaching. It must be linked up with the concrete practice of the class movement, which aims at eliminating the social roots of religion. Why does religion retain its hold on the backward sections of the town proletariat, on broad sections of the semi-proletariat, and on the mass of the peasantry? Because of the ignorance of the people, replies the bourgeois progressist, the radical or the bourgeois materialist. And so: "Down with religion and long live atheism; the dissemination of atheist views is our chief task!" The Marxist says that this is not true, that it is a superficial view, the view of narrow bourgeois uplifters. It does not explain the roots of religion profoundly enough; it explains them, not in a materialist but in an idealist way. In modern capitalist countries these roots are mainly *social*. The deepest root of religion today is the socially downtrodden condition

of the working masses and their apparently complete helplessness in face of the blind forces of capitalism, which every day and every hour inflicts upon ordinary working people the most horrible suffering and the most savage torment, a thousand times more severe than those inflicted by extraordinary events, such as wars, earthquakes, etc. "Fear made the gods." Fear of the blind force of capital—blind because it cannot be foreseen by the masses of the people—a force which at every step in the life of the proletariat and small proprietor threatens to inflict, and does inflict "sudden", "unexpected", "accidental" ruin, destruction, pauperism, prostitution, death from starvation—such is *the root* of modern religion which the materialist must bear in mind first and foremost, if he does not want to remain an infant-school materialist. No educational book can eradicate religion from the minds of masses who are crushed by capitalist hard labour, and who are at the mercy of the blind destructive forces of capitalism, until those masses themselves learn to fight this *root* of religion, fight *the rule of capital* in all its forms, in a united, organised, planned and conscious way.

Does this mean that educational books against religion are harmful or unnecessary? No, nothing of the kind. It means that Social-Democracy's atheist propaganda must be *subordinated* to its basic task—the development of the class struggle of the exploited *masses* against the exploiters.

This proposition may not be understood (or at least not immediately understood) by one who has not pondered over the principles of dialectical materialism, i.e., the philosophy of Marx and Engels. How is that?—he will say. Is ideological propaganda, the preaching of definite ideas, the struggle against that enemy of culture and progress which has persisted for thousands or years (i.e., religion) to be subordinated to the class struggle, i.e., the struggle for definite practical aims in the economic and political field?

This is one of those current objections to Marxism which testify to a complete misunderstanding of Marxian dialectics. The contradiction which perplexes these objectors is a real contradiction in real life, i.e., a dialectical contradiction, and not a verbal or invented one. To draw a hard-and-

fast line between the theoretical propaganda of atheism, i.e., the destruction of religious beliefs among certain sections of the proletariat, and the success, the progress and the conditions of the class struggle of these sections, is to reason undialectically, to transform a shifting and relative boundary into an absolute boundary; it is forcibly to disconnect what is indissolubly connected in real life. Let us take an example. The proletariat in a particular region and in a particular industry is divided, let us assume, into an advanced section of fairly class-conscious Social-Democrats, who are of course atheists, and rather backward workers who are still connected with the countryside and with the peasantry, and who believe in God, go to church, or are even under the direct influence of the local priest—who, let us suppose, is organising a Christian labour union. Let us assume furthermore that the economic struggle in this locality has resulted in a strike. It is the duty of a Marxist to place the success of the strike movement above everything else, vigorously to counteract the division of the workers in this struggle into atheists and Christians, vigorously to oppose any such division. Atheist propaganda in such circumstances may be both unnecessary and harmful—not from the philistine fear of scaring away the backward sections, of losing a seat in the elections, and so on, but out of consideration for the real progress of the class struggle, which in the conditions of modern capitalist society will convert Christian workers to Social-Democracy and to atheism a hundred times better than bald atheist propaganda. To preach atheism at such a moment and in such circumstances would only be playing *into the hands* of the priest and the priests, who desire nothing better than that the division of the workers according to their participation in the strike movement should be replaced by their division according to their belief in God. An anarchist who preached war against God at all costs would in effect be helping the priests and the bourgeoisie (as the anarchists always do help the bourgeoisie *in practice*). A Marxist must be a materialist, i.e., an enemy of religion, but a dialectical materialist, i.e., one who treats the struggle against religion not in an abstract way, not on the basis of remote, purely theoretical, never varying preaching, but in a concrete way, on the basis of the class struggle

which is going on *in practice* and is educating the masses more and better than anything else could. A Marxist must be able to view the concrete situation as a whole, he must always be able to find the boundary between anarchism and opportunism (this boundary is relative, shifting and changeable, but it exists). And he must not succumb either to the abstract, verbal, but in reality empty "revolutionism" of the anarchist, or to the philistinism and opportunism of the petty bourgeois or liberal intellectual, who boggles at the struggle against religion, forgets that this is his duty, reconciles himself to belief in God, and is guided not by the interests of the class struggle but by the petty and mean consideration of offending nobody, repelling nobody and scaring nobody—by the sage rule: "live and let live", etc., etc.

It is from this angle that all side issues bearing on the attitude of Social-Democrats to religion should be dealt with. For example, the question is often brought up whether a priest can be a member of the Social-Democratic Party or not, and this question is usually answered in an unqualified affirmative, the experience of the European Social-Democratic parties being cited as evidence. But this experience was the result, not only of the application of the Marxist doctrine to the workers' movement, but also of the special historical conditions in Western Europe which are absent in Russia (we will say more about these conditions later), so that an unqualified affirmative answer in this case is incorrect. It cannot be asserted once and for all that priests cannot be members of the Social-Democratic Party; but neither can the reverse rule be laid down. If a priest comes to us to take part in our common political work and conscientiously performs Party duties, without opposing the programme of the Party, he may be allowed to join the ranks of the Social-Democrats; for the contradiction between the spirit and principles of our programme and the religious convictions of the priest would in such circumstances be something that concerned him alone, his own private contradiction; and a political organisation cannot put its members through an examination to see if there is no contradiction between their views and the Party programme. But, of course, such a case might be a rare exception even in Western

Europe, while in Russia it is altogether improbable. And if, for example, a priest joined the Social-Democratic Party and made it his chief and almost sole work actively to propagate religious views in the Party, it would unquestionably have to expel him from its ranks. We must not only admit workers who preserve their belief in God into the Social-Democratic Party, but must deliberately set out to recruit them; we are absolutely opposed to giving the slightest offence to their religious convictions, but we recruit them in order to educate them in the spirit of our programme, and not in order to permit an active struggle against it. We allow freedom of opinion *within* the Party, but to certain limits, determined by freedom of grouping; we are not obliged to go hand in hand with active preachers of views that are repudiated by the majority of the Party.

Another example. Should members of the Social-Democratic Party be censured all alike under all circumstances for declaring "socialism is my religion", and for advocating views in keeping with this declaration? No! The deviation from Marxism (and consequently from socialism) is here indisputable; but the significance of the deviation, its relative importance, so to speak, may vary with circumstances. It is one thing when an agitator or a person addressing the workers speaks in this way in order to make himself better understood, as an introduction to his subject, in order to present his views more vividly in terms to which the backward masses are most accustomed. It is another thing when a writer begins to preach "god-building", or god-building socialism (in the spirit, for example, of our Lunacharsky and Co.). While in the first case censure would be mere carping, or even inappropriate restriction of the freedom of the agitator, of his freedom in choosing "pedagogical" methods, in the second case party censure is necessary and essential. For some the statement "socialism is a religion" is a form of transition from religion to socialism; for others, it is a form of transition *from* socialism to religion.

Let us now pass to the conditions which in the West gave rise to the opportunist interpretation of the thesis: "religion is a private matter". Of course, a contributing influence are those general factors which give rise to opportunism as a whole, like sacrificing the fundamental interests

of the working-class movement for the sake of momentary advantages. The party of the proletariat demands that *the state* should declare religion a private matter, but does not regard the fight against the opium of the people, the fight against religious superstitions, etc., as a "private matter". The opportunists distort the question to mean that the *Social-Democratic* Party *regards* religion as a private matter!

But in addition to the usual opportunist distortion (which was not made clear at all in the discussion within our Duma group when it was considering the speech on religion), there are special historical conditions which have given rise to the present-day, and, if one may so express it, excessive, indifference on the part of the European Social-Democrats to the question of religion. These conditions are of a twofold nature. First, the task of combating religion is historically the task of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, and in the West this task was to a large extent performed (or tackled) by bourgeois democracy, in the epoch of *its* revolutions or its assaults upon feudalism and medievalism. Both in France and in Germany there is a tradition of bourgeois war on religion, and it began long before socialism (the Encyclopaedists, Feuerbach). In Russia, because of the conditions of our bourgeois-democratic revolution, this task too falls almost entirely on the shoulders of the working class. Petty-bourgeois (Narodnik) democracy in our country has not done too much in this respect (as the new-fledged Black-Hundred Cadets, or Cadet Black Hundreds, of *Vekhi*[152] think), but rather *too little*, in comparison with what has been done in Europe.

On the other hand, the tradition of bourgeois war on religion has given rise in Europe to a specifically bourgeois *distortion* of this war by anarchism—which, as the Marxists have long explained time and again, takes its stand on the bourgeois world-outlook, in spite of all the "fury" of its attacks on the bourgeoisie. The anarchists and Blanquists in the Latin countries, Most (who, incidentally, was a pupil of Dühring) and his ilk in Germany, the anarchists in Austria in the eighties, all carried revolutionary phrasemongering in the struggle against religion to a *nec plus ultra*. It is not surprising that, compared with the anarch-

ists, the European Social-Democrats now *go to the other extreme*. This is quite understandable and to a certain extent legitimate, but it would be wrong for us Russian Social-Democrats to forget the special historical conditions of the West.

Secondly, in the West, *after* the national bourgeois revolutions were over, *after* more or less complete religious liberty had been introduced, the problem of the democratic struggle against religion had been pushed, historically, so far into the background by the struggle of bourgeois democracy against socialism that the bourgeois governments *deliberately* tried to draw the attention of the masses away from socialism by organising a quasi-liberal "offensive" against clericalism. Such was the character of the *Kulturkampf* in Germany and of the struggle of the bourgeois republicans against clericalism in France. Bourgeois anti-clericalism, as a means of drawing the attention of the working-class masses away from socialism—this is what preceded the spread of the modern spirit of "indifference" to the struggle against religion among the Social-Democrats in the West. And this again is quite understandable and legitimate, because Social-Democrats had to counteract bourgeois and Bismarckian anti-clericalism by *subordinating* the struggle against religion to the struggle for socialism.

In Russia conditions are quite different. The proletariat is the leader of our bourgeois-democratic revolution. Its party must be the ideological leader in the struggle against all attributes of medievalism, including the old official religion and every attempt to refurbish it or make out a new or different case for it, etc. Therefore, while Engels was comparatively mild in correcting the opportunism of the German Social-Democrats who were substituting, for the demand of the workers' party that the *state* should declare religion a private matter, the *declaration* that religion is a private matter for the Social-Democrats themselves, and for the Social-Democratic Party, it is clear that the importation of this German distortion by the Russian opportunists would have merited a rebuke a *hundred times* more severe by Engels.

By declaring from the Duma rostrum that religion is the opium of the people, our Duma group acted quite correctly,

and thus created a precedent which should serve as a basis for all utterances by Russian Social-Democrats on the question of religion. Should they have gone further and developed the atheist argument in greater detail? We think not. This might have brought the risk of the political party of the proletariat exaggerating the struggle against religion; it might have resulted in obliterating the distinction between the bourgeois and the socialist struggle against religion. The first duty of the Social-Democratic group in the Black-Hundred Duma has been discharged with honour.

The second duty—and perhaps the most important for Social-Democrats—namely, to explain the class role of the church and the clergy in supporting the Black-Hundred government and the bourgeoisie in its fight against the working class, has also been discharged with honour. Of course, very much more might be said on this subject, and the Social-Democrats in their future utterances will know how to amplify Comrade Surkov's speech; but still his speech was excellent, and its circulation by all Party organisations is the direct duty of our Party.

The third duty was to explain in full detail the *correct* meaning of the proposition, so often distorted by the German opportunists, that "religion is a private matter". This, unfortunately, Comrade Surkov did not do. It is all the more regrettable because in the earlier activity of the Duma group a mistake had been committed on this question by Comrade Belousov, and was pointed out at the time by *Proletary*. The discussion in the Duma group shows that the dispute about atheism has screened from it the question of the proper interpretation of the celebrated demand that religion should be proclaimed a private matter. We shall not blame Comrade Surkov alone for this error of the entire Duma group. More, we shall frankly admit that the whole Party is at fault here, for not having sufficiently elucidated this question and not having sufficiently prepared the minds of Social-Democrats to understand Engels's remark levelled against the German opportunists. The discussion in the Duma group proves that there was in fact a confused understanding of the question, and not at all any desire to ignore the teachings of Marx; and we are sure that the error will be corrected in future utterances of the group.

We repeat that on the whole Comrade Surkov's speech was excellent, and should be circulated by all the organisations. In its discussion of this speech the Duma group demonstrated that it is fulfilling its Social-Democratic duty conscientiously. It remains to express the wish that reports on discussions within the Duma group should appear more often in the Party press so as to bring the group and the Party closer together, to acquaint the Party with the difficult work being done within the group, and to establish ideological unity in the work of the Party and the Duma group.

Proletary, No. 45,
April 13 (26), 1909

Published according
to the text in *Proletary*

LA LIQUIDACION DE LOS LIQUIDADORES [1]

El estado de espíritu de desaliento que era la consecuencia inevitable de la derrota de la revolución se manifestó por una pasividad general de los obreros. Se ha visto ya el descenso brusco del número de huelguistas en 1908 y en 1909. Sin embargo, en el terreno económico subsiste una animación relativa: las únicas organizaciones que interesan en este momento son las sindicatos, las cooperativas y las obras de educación, toleradas, por otra parte, unos y otras de un modo relativo por el poder. Por el contrario, hacia la política la indiferencia es completa: los militantes experimentados están encarcelados, los directores, huyendo de las persecuciones, están en el extranjero, y los obreros de sentimientos revolucionarios, pero sin formación seria, sin convicción reflexiva, vuelven a la vida privada. Así los partidos ven como se derriten sus filas (2).

El partido socialdemócrata es cruelmente puesto a prueba numérica y moralmente. Organizaciones enteras desaparecen: las que estaban formadas sobre todo por intelectuales. Entre los intelectuales, en efecto, los unos, que habían sido seducidos al principio por el brillo de las consignas revolucionarios, debían, naturalmente, irse una vez llegados los días sombríos: los otros, que

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edición rusa, t. XI, I parte, páginas 272-279.

(2) Como ilustración, pueden citarse las cifras de la organización provincial de Moscú (provincia de Moscú, menos la capital): en un territorio que contaba aproximadamente 200.000 obreros industriales, se tiene, en 1905-1906, 2.000 socialdemócratas; en 1909, 260; en 1910, 150 aproximadamente. Para tener una idea de los inconvenientes que resultaban del traslado al extranjero de los órganos directores del partido, es preciso saber, por ejemplo, la pequeña cantidad de ejemplares de *El Proletario* que llegaba a Rusia: del núm. 39, 13 ejemplares; de los números 41, 42 y 43, 62 ejemplares; del núm. 44, 112 ejemplares; del núm. 46, 436 ejemplares; del núm. 47-48, 1.131 ejemplares.

en realidad, y a causa de su origen pequeño-burgués, tenían un ideal más bien democrático que proletario, estimaban inútil militar todavía por reivindicaciones parcialmente satisfechas.

Este estado de espíritu de decadencia da nacimiento en cada fracción del partido a diversas tendencias.

Entre los mencheviques se plantea la cuestión: ¿es necesario conservar el antiguo partido socialdemócrata, es necesario continuar su obra, es necesario volver de nuevo a la ilegalidad, y cómo hacerlo? Los más a derecha responden en el sentido de la legalización a toda costa, renunciando incluso al programa del partido, a su táctica y a su estructura. Se trataba nada menos que de considerar como "los elementos más activos de la clase obrera" a los que habían salido del partido, y de retirar a éste "la decisión de las cuestiones concernientes a la política diaria y al movimiento obrero" para remitirla a conferencias de los "elementos socialdemócratas que emplean actualmente su actividad socialdemócrata fuera de los cuadros del partido". Es la tendencia de los liquidadores. "La crisis, por consiguiente, no es solamente de organización, sino también de ideas y de política" (Lenin. En el camino. artículo del 28 de febrero de 1909). Los "liquidadores" son mayoría en la fracción; hay, sin embargo, síntomas de la formación de una minoría que eleva su voz contra ellos: son los "mencheviques de partido", bastante fuertes en Moscú, y con los cuales marcha Plejánov.

Entre los bolcheviques, la tendencia boicotista, condenada por la conferencia de Viborg en julio de 1907, se transforma, después de la elección de 15 diputados socialdemócratas a la tercera Duma, en tendencia otzovista, que reclama la retirada de estos diputados. La conducta de la fracción socialdemócrata, en efecto, daba ocasión a críticas justificadas sobre su timidez, su inactividad e incluso su oportunismo: una conferencia celebrada en Moscú, en mayo de 1908, se veía colocada en presencia de una resolución que declaraba "que casi seis meses de legislatura habían claramente demostrado la imposibilidad para los diputados socialdemócratas de realizar ninguna acción de agitación y de organización... y que su conducta, tal como se había manifestado en las intervenciones públicas en la Duma, no tenía ningún carácter socialdemócrata revolucionario". Se invitaba a estos diputados a renunciar a su

actas, único medio de "subrayar tanto la verdadera naturaleza de la Duma como la táctica revolucionaria del partido socialdemócrata de Rusia". Esta resolución era rechazada, pero la discusión se encontraba por este mismo hecho iniciada. Bogdánov, uno de los líderes boicotistas de 1907, escribía que no había que tomar una medida tan arriesgada como retirar los diputados antes de haber agotado todos los medios de acción para hacerles entrar en razón, antes de haberles presentado dos ultimatums: obediencia absoluta al partido y al Comité central, subordinación de su acción parlamentaria a la acción extraparlamentaria del partido. Así se desarrollaba al lado del otzovismo (partidarios de la retirada inmediata) el ultimatismo (partidarios del aplazamiento de la retirada hasta después de la respuesta a los dos ultimatums).

En el partido socialdemócrata se manifestaba, ya lo hemos visto, otra tendencia que ponía en tela de juicio no ya la táctica y la organización, sino la filosofía misma del marxismo. Gorki, entonces socialdemócrata, y después de él Lunacharski, habían emitido la idea de que el socialismo, para ser accesible a los elementos no proletarizados, a los campesinos entre otros, no debía serles presentado bajo la apariencia "de fórmulas severas y frías", sino que debía adaptarse a su manera de pensar, en particular a su mentalidad religiosa. Es preciso decir al hombre religioso: "¿Buscas a Dios? Dios es la Humanidad de mañana; constrúyele en común con la Humanidad de hoy, uniéndote a sus elementos de vanguardia". Así, a los "buscadores de Dios", en boga en esa época en la sociedad intelectual, había socialdemócratas que, colocándose en el mismo terreno, oponían la "construcción de Dios". Bogdánov, el defensor del otzovismo, era también el inventor de una filosofía que pretendía conciliar el idealismo de los neokantistas con el materialismo, bajo el nombre de "empiriomonismo".

La reacción contra estas diversas tendencias fué vigorosa en la fracción bolchevista. Esta última, que tenía la mayoría en la conferencia nacional celebrada en 21 de diciembre de 1908 en París, hizo adoptar varias resoluciones que afirmaban de nuevo la vieja concepción del partido, los viejos objetivos revolucionarios; la tendencia a "liquidar la organización existente del partido y a reemplazarla por una agrupación

informe, en el marco de la legalidad a toda costa", debía ser combatida; hacía falta, por el contrario, "crear y reforzar el partido ilegal, pues, solamente bajo su dirección pueden realizarse convenientemente la agitación entre las masas, la acción del partido sobre la fracción parlamentaria y, alrededor de ésta última, toda la utilización de las organizaciones legales y semilegales sin disminución de los objetivos de clase de la socialdemocracia". Un párrafo afirmaba la necesidad de utilizar la tribuna de la tercera Duma para la agitación revolucionaria.

De este modo se declaraba la guerra a la vez a los liquidadores y al otzovismo. El Proletario no cesaba de criticar a este último y a su acólito el ultimatismo. En fin, en los últimos días de junio de 1909, una "conferencia de la redacción ampliada de El Proletario", es decir, de los bolcheviques, celebrada en París, se terminó por la condenación a la vez de estas dos "desviaciones del marxismo revolucionario" ("El bolchevismo como fracción no tiene nada de común con el otzovismo y el ultimatismo") y de los que pretendían "dar al socialismo científico el carácter de una creencia religiosa", es decir, los "constructores de Dios".

En este momento la situación es grave: se está en vísperas de una escisión entre los directores de la fracción bolchevista. Lenin consagra frecuentemente su atención a este tema en El Proletario *que se publicaba entonces en Ginebra. El número 46 contiene a la vez, en su Suplemento, el texto de las resoluciones de la conferencia bolchevista de París y un artículo de introducción de Lenin a estas resoluciones y, en el texto general del periódico, el artículo siguiente.*

***

En el *Suplemento* especial al presente número de *El Proletario* el lector encontrará una información de la conferencia de los bolcheviques y el texto de las resoluciones adoptadas. En este artículo nos proponemos juzgar desde el punto de vista de nuestra fracción y de todo el partido obrero socialdemócrata de Rusia dicha conferencia y la separación de un pequeño grupo de bolchevikis (1).

(1) En junio de 1909 se celebró en París, en el domicilio de Lenin,

THE LIQUIDATION OF LIQUIDATIONISM

In a special supplement to the present issue of *Proletary* the reader will find a report on the conference of the Bolsheviks and the text of the resolutions adopted there.* Our purpose in the present article is to assess the importance of this conference and the breakaway of a small group of the Bolsheviks which took place there, from the standpoint both of our wing and of the R.S.D.L.P. as a whole.

The last two years, roughly from the coup d'état of June 3, 1907, up to the present time, have been a period of drastic change, of grave crisis in the history of the Russian revolution and in the development of the working-class movement in Russia and of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. held in December 1908 reviewed the present political situation, the condition and prospects of the revolutionary movement and the tasks of the party of the working class in the present period. The resolutions passed by the conference are a permanent asset to the Party, and the Menshevik opportunists who sought to criticise them at all costs, only succeeded in betraying the glaring futility of their "criticism" which was unable to offer any intelligent, integral and systematic solution of the problems as an alternative to the one given in the resolutions.

But that was not all. The conference played an important roll in the life of our Party by indicating the existence of *new ideological groupings* in both wings—the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks. The struggle between these sections

* See pp. 425-51 of this volume.—*Ed.*

can be said without exaggeration to have filled the whole history of the Party, both on the eve of the revolution and during the revolution. Therefore the new ideological groupings are an event of great importance in the life of the Party, an event whose lessons all Social-Democrats should study, understand and digest, if they are to take an intelligent stand on the new issues which this new situation raises.

These new ideological groupings may be briefly described as the appearance of liquidationism on both the extreme flanks of the Party and as the struggle being waged against it. By December 1908 liquidationism stood fully revealed among the Mensheviks, but at that time the fight against it was conducted almost exclusively by others (the Bolsheviks, the Polish and Lettish Social-Democrats, a section of the Bundists). The pro-Party Mensheviks, Mensheviks who were opposed to liquidationism, had barely begun to emerge as a trend at that time, and were not at all united or open in their criticism. Among the Bolsheviks both sections were clearly defined and acted openly, namely, the overwhelming majority of orthodox Bolsheviks, who were firmly opposed to otzovism and secured the adoption of their point of view in all the resolutions of the conference, and the otzovist minority who advocated their views as a separate group, and received frequent support from the ultimatumists who wavered between them and the orthodox Bolsheviks. That the otzovists (and the ultimatumists, too, insofar as they are coming round to the otzovist viewpoint) are Mensheviks inside out, liquidators of a new type, has been repeatedly asserted and demonstrated in *Proletary* (see especially issues Nos. 39, 42, and 44*). Thus among the Mensheviks the overwhelming majority were liquidators, and the protest and struggle of the pro-Party men against them were barely beginning to manifest themselves; while among the Bolsheviks the orthodox elements were completely dominant, but an otzovist minority were acting openly. Such was the situation within the Party at the December All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.

* See pp. 286-302, 356-59 and 383-94 of this volume.—*Ed.*

What is this liquidationism, then? What brought it into being? Why is it that the otzovists (and the god-builders of whom we shall say a few words later) are also liquidators, Mensheviks inside out? In a word, what is the social meaning and the social significance of the new ideological grouping within our Party?

Liquidationism in the narrow sense of the word, the liquidationism of the Mensheviks, consists ideologically in negation of the revolutionary class struggle of the socialist proletariat in general, and denial of the hegemony of the proletariat in our bourgeois-democratic revolution in particular. This denial of course takes various forms, and occurs more or less consciously, sharply and consistently. As an example we might mention Cherevanin and Potresov. The former gave such an assessment of the role of the proletariat in the revolution that the *whole* editorial board of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, even before the split that took place in it (i.e., both Plekhanov and Martov-Dan-Axelrod-Martynov) had to repudiate Cherevanin, although it did so in a very discreditable form. It repudiated the consistent liquidator in *Vorwärts* to the Germans *without publishing its statement in "Golos Sotsial-Demokrata" for the benefit of Russian readers*! In the article which he contributed to the *Social Movement in Russia at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*, Potresov liquidated the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the Russian revolution so successfully that Plekhanov left the liquidationist editorial board.

In respect of organisation, liquidationism means denying the necessity for an illegal Social-Democratic Party, and consequently renouncing the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, leaving its ranks. It means fighting the Party in the columns of the legal press, in legal workers' organisations, in the trade unions and co-operative societies, at congresses attended by working-class delegates, etc. The history of any Party organisation in Russia during the last two years teems with examples of liquidationism on the part of the Mensheviks. As a particularly glaring example of liquidationism, we have already referred (*Proletary*, No. 42, reprinted in the pamphlet *The All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. in December 1908*) to the case where the

Menshevik members of the Central Committee made a deliberate attempt to *wreck the Central Committee of the Party*, and stop the functioning of this institution. The almost complete breakdown of the illegal Menshevik organisations in Russia is borne out by the fact that the "Caucasian delegation" at the recent Party conference consisted entirely of residents abroad, while the editorial board of "*Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*" was confirmed (at the beginning of 1908) by the Central Committee of the Party as a separate literary group, totally unconnected with any organisation functioning in Russia.

The Mensheviks do not weigh up the implications of all these manifestations of liquidationism. They either conceal them or are baffled by them, at a loss to understand the significance of certain facts, floundering in minutiae, vagaries and personalities, unable to draw general conclusions, unable to grasp the meaning of what is going on.

And the meaning of it is that, in a period of bourgeois revolution, the opportunist wing of the workers' party, at times of crisis, disintegration and collapse, is bound to be either out-and-out liquidationist or liquidator-ridden. In a period of bourgeois revolution the proletarian party *is bound* to have a following of petty-bourgeois *fellow-travellers* (what is known as *Mitläufer* in German) who are least capable of digesting proletarian theory and tactics, least capable of holding their own in time of collapse, most likely to carry opportunism to its extreme. Disintegration has set in—and the mass of Menshevik intellectuals, Menshevik writers, have virtually turned liberal. The intelligentsia has swung away from the Party—and *consequently* disintegration has been most complete in the Menshevik organisations. Those Mensheviks who sincerely sympathised with the proletariat and the proletarian class struggle, with proletarian revolutionary theory (and there have always been such Mensheviks who justify their opportunism in the revolution on the grounds that they are anxious to miss no changes in the situation, no convolutions in the complex historical process) found themselves "in the minority once more", in a minority among the Mensheviks, without the determination to fight the liquidators and without the strength to succeed if they tried. But the opportunist fellow-travellers move further

and further to liberalism. Plekhanov becomes exasperated with Potresov, *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* with Cherevanin, the Moscow Menshevik workingmen with the Menshevik intellectuals, *and so forth*. The pro-Party Mensheviks, the orthodox Marxists among the Mensheviks, are beginning to break away and, by the logic of things, by becoming *pro-Party*, they draw nearer to the Bolsheviks. And it is our duty to understand this situation, everywhere and in every way to separate the liquidators from the pro-Party Mensheviks, to make closer contact with the latter, not by glossing over differences in principle, but by building up a really united workers' party in which differences of opinion should not stand in the way of the common effort, the common drive, the common struggle.

But are petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers of the proletariat the exclusive property of the Menshevik wing? No. We have already pointed out in *Proletary*, No. 39,* that they are to be found also among the Bolsheviks, as testified by the entire mode of argument of the consistent otzovists, the whole character of their attempts to justify "new" tactics. No sizable section of a mass workers' party could, by the nature of things, avoid during a time of bourgeois revolution taking on a certain number of "fellow-travellers" of diverse shadings. This is inevitable even in the most highly developed capitalist countries, after the completion of a bourgeois revolution, for the proletariat is ever in contact with the most varied sections of the petty bourgeoisie and is constantly being recruited and replenished from them. There is nothing abnormal or terrible in this, *if* the proletarian party is able thoroughly to absorb these foreign bodies, to control and not be controlled by them, and is able to see in good time that some of these elements really are foreign bodies, and that in certain conditions one must clearly and openly dissociate oneself from them. In this respect the difference between the two wings of the R.S.D.L.P. is that the Mensheviks turned out to be in thrall to the liquidators (i.e., the "fellow-travellers"), proof of which is to be found among the Mensheviks themselves, being supplied both

* See pp. 286-302 of this volume.—*Ed.*

by their Moscow adherents in Russia, and abroad by Plekhanov's repudiation of Potresov and *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*; while in the case of the Bolsheviks the liquidationist elements—the otzovists and god-builders—proved to be a small minority from the outset, were rendered harmless from the outset, and were ultimately pushed aside.

That otzovism is Menshevism inside out, that it also leads inevitably to liquidationism, only of a slightly different kind, there can be no doubt. It is not, of course, a matter of personalities or particular groups, but of an objective general tendency—to the extent that otzovism ceases to be a mere state of mind and seeks to evolve into a separate trend. The Bolsheviks stated quite definitely before the revolution, first, that their aim was not to create a separate trend in socialism but to apply to the new conditions of our revolution the basic principles of international revolutionary orthodox Marxist Social-Democracy; secondly, they would do their duty even should it consist in an onerous, slow, humdrum daily grind, if history, after the issue of the struggle and after all opportunities for revolutionary action were exhausted, should condemn us to plod along the by-paths of an "autocratic constitution". The least attentive reader will find these statements in the Social-Democratic literature of 1905. They are of immense importance as a solemn obligation of the whole Bolshevik wing of the Party, a deliberate choice of path. In order to fulfil this obligation to the proletariat, it was necessary to take patiently in hand and re-educate those who had been attracted to Social-Democracy by the days of liberty (there even appeared a type of "Social-Democrat of the days of liberty"), who were attracted chiefly by the vehemence, revolutionary spirit and "vividness" of our slogans, but, who, though militant enough to fight on revolutionary holidays, lacked the stamina for workaday struggle under the reign of counter-revolution. Some of these elements were gradually drawn into proletarian activities and assimilated the Marxist world-outlook. The others only memorised a few slogans without grasping their meaning, could only repeat old phrases and were unable to adapt the old principles of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics to the changed conditions. Their several destinies are graphically illustrated by the evolution of those who

wanted to boycott the Third Duma. In June 1907 they were the majority among the Bolsheviks. But *Proletary* campaigned continuously against the boycott. Events verified this policy and a year later the otzovists were *in the minority* among the Bolsheviks (14 votes against 18 in the summer of 1908) in the Moscow organisation, which had been the stronghold of "boycottism". A year later, when the error of otzovism had been abundantly and repeatedly demonstrated, the Bolshevik wing—and here lies the significance of the recent Bolshevik conference—finally liquidated otzovism and ultimatumism, the thin end of otzovism, finally liquidated this peculiar form of liquidationism.

So let none accuse us of causing a "new split". In the Report on our conference we explain our aims and our attitude in detail. We did everything possible, we left nothing untried, to persuade the dissenting comrades: we were at it for over eighteen months. But as a wing, i.e., a union of like-minded people in the Party, we cannot work without unanimity on fundamental issues. To break away from a wing is not the same as breaking away from the Party. The people who have broken away from our wing in no way lose the possibility of working in the Party. Either they will remain "free lances", i.e., outside any wing, and the general environment of Party work will draw them in. Or they will try to form a new group—as is their legitimate right, if they wish to advocate and develop their own special shade of opinion and tactics—in which case the *whole Party* will very soon see the practical manifestation of those *tendencies*, the ideological implications of which we have tried to assess above.

The Bolsheviks have to lead the Party. To do so they must know their course, they must stop hesitating, they must stop wasting time on persuading waverers, and fighting dissentients in their own ranks. Otzovism and ultimatumism, the thin end of otzovism, are incompatible with the work which the present circumstances require of revolutionary Social-Democrats. During the revolution we learned to "speak French", i.e., to introduce into the movement the greatest number of rousing slogans, to raise the energy of the direct struggle of the masses and extend its scope. Now, in this time of stagnation, reaction and disintegration, we

must learn to "speak German", i.e., to work slowly (there is nothing else for it, until things revive), systematically, steadily, advancing step by step, winning inch by inch. Whoever finds this work tedious, whoever does not understand the need for preserving and developing the revolutionary principles of Social-Democratic tactics *in this phase too*, *on this bend of the road*, is taking the name of Marxist in vain.

Our Party can make no headway unless it decisively liquidates liquidationism. And liquidationism does not only mean the direct liquidationism of the Mensheviks and their opportunist tactics. It also includes Menshevism inside out. It includes otzovism and ultimatumism, that are impeding the Party in the fulfilment of its immediate task, in which lie all the unique peculiarities of the present time, the task of utilising the Duma rostrum and turning all the semi-legal and legal organisations of the working class into coigns of vantage. The same goes for god-building and the defence of god-building tendencies which are radically at variance with the principles of Marxism. And the same applies to incomprehension of the Party tasks of the Bolsheviks, which in 1906 and 1907 consisted in *overthrowing* the Menshevik Central Committee, as a body which *lacked the support* of the majority of the Party (not only the Poles and Letts, but even the Bundists were against the Central Committee, which was purely Menshevik at the time)—and which now consist in patiently training up partyist elements and knitting them together, in building up a really united and strong proletarian party. The Bolsheviks prepared the ground for partyism by their implacable struggle against the anti-Party elements in 1903-05 and in 1906-07. Now the Bolsheviks must *build the Party*, build the Party out of their wing, build up the Party by utilising the vantage-ground gained in the inner-Party struggle.

Such are the tasks of our wing of the Party in the present political situation and the general position of the R.S.D.L.P. as a whole. They are set forth once more and developed in particular detail in the resolutions of the recent Bolshevik Conference. The ranks have been re-formed for a new struggle. The changed conditions have been taken into ac-

count. The road has been chosen. Let us go forward along it and the revolutionary Social-Democratic Labour Party of Russia will begin rapidly to build up into a force which no reaction will shake, and which will stand at the head of all the fighting classes of the people in the next round of our revolution.*

Proletary, No. 46,
July 11 (24), 1909

Published according
to the text in *Proletary*

---

* *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, No. 15, and *Otkliki Bunda*, No. 2[168] have recently appeared. In these publications there is once again piled up a heap of choice specimens of liquidationism, which will need analysing and evaluating in a separate article in the next issue of *Proletary*.

SOBRE LA FRACCION DE LOS "OTZOVISTAS" Y DE LOS "CONSTRUCTORES DE DIOS" (1)

En respuesta a la decisión de la conferencia bolchevista de junio de 1909, Bogdánov y Krassin publicaron en el extranjero una hoja intitulada: "Informe de los miembros excluidos de la redacción ampliada de El Proletario *a los camaradas bolcheviques".*

Los autores acusaban a El Proletario *de considerar al grupo parlamentario como el centro de la vida del partido, siendo así que, por el contrario, debían dominar tres objetivos: la conservación del partido ilegal, la ampliación de la propaganda socialista, la preparación militar teórica y práctica por medio de escuelas y de grupos de instructores. Al mismo tiempo que afirmaban que no se solidarizaban con el otzovismo, al cual declaraban poco ventajoso para el partido, le defendían diciendo que jamás había preconizado "el antiparlamentarismo en general", y agregaban: "Bajo un régimen de reacción aguda y creciente el partido no puede hacer una vasta y brillante campaña electoral, no puede obtener una representación parlamentaria digna de él... En estas condiciones, la utilidad de nuestra participación en un pseudo-parlamento es dudosa y discutible; en ningún caso la acción parlamentaria puede tener una importancia esencial o de primer orden en la vida del partido; en ningún caso debe adquirir en él un papel dominante y decisivo". La hoja acusaba, en fin, a la redacción de* El Proletario *de haber roto ilegítimamente la unidad de la fracción bolchevista.*

El suplemento del número 47-48 de El Proletario

(1) Obras completas, primera edición rusa, t. XI, 1 parte, páginas 305-309.

está consagrado al análisis y a la refutación del informe. A pesar de que no está firmado, su contenido y su tono permiten atribuirlo a Lenin.

∴

Los camaradas Bogdánov y Krassin han lanzado una hoja intitulada *Informe de los miembros excluidos de la redacción ampliada de "El Proletario" a los camaradas bolchevikis.* Nuestros excluidos se quejan amargamente ante el público de las ofensas que les ha inferido la redacción y de la manera como les ha separado.

Para mostrar al partido de la clase obrera de qué especie son esos excluidos que se lamentan amargamente, veamos ante todo lo que contiene su hoja en cuanto a principios. Como los lectores saben por el número 46 de *El Proletario* y por su suplemento (1), la conferencia de la redacción ampliada de *El Proletario* ha comprobado que Bogdánov es uno de los organizadores en nuestro partido de una nueva fracción con la cual el bolchevismo no tiene nada de común y ha declinado "toda responsabilidad con respecto a los actos políticos del camarada Bogdánov". De las resoluciones de la conferencia resulta que el fondo del desacuerdo con la nueva fracción separada de los bolcheviques (o más bien con Bogdánov y sus amigos) es, primeramente, el *otzovismo* y el *ultimatismo*; en segundo lugar, la "construcción de Dios". Tres resoluciones detalladas exponen el punto de vista de la fracción bolchevista sobre una y otra de estas tendencias.

¿Qué responden ahora los excluidos que se lamentan tan amargamente?

(1) El núm. 46 de *El Proletario* contenía el artículo precedente y su *Suplemento* una *Introducción a las resoluciones de la conferencia ampliada de «El Proletario»*.

THE FACTION OF SUPPORTERS OF OTZOVISM AND GOD-BUILDING

Comrades Maximov and Nikolayev have issued a special leaflet entitled "Report of the Members Removed from the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary* to the Bolshevik Comrades." Our victims of removal most bitterly complain to the public of the wrongs suffered by them at the hands of the editorial board and how it removed them.

To show the party of the working class what kind of people these bitterly complaining victims of removal are, let us first of all examine the principles embodied in their leaflet. The reader knows, from *Proletary* No. 46 and the supplement to it, that the Conference of the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* adjudged Comrade Maximov to be one of the organisers of a new faction in our Party, a faction with which Bolshevism has nothing in common, and it disclaimed "all responsibility for the political actions of Comrade Maximov".[24] It is evident from the resolutions of the Conference that the fundamental issue of divergence with the new faction that has broken away from the Bolsheviks (or rather, with Maximov and his friends) is, firstly, otzovism and ultimatumism; secondly, god-building. The attitude of the Bolshevik group to both trends is set out in three detailed resolutions.

What now do the bitterly complaining victims of removal say in reply?

I

Let us begin with otzovism. Our victims of removal sum up the parliamentary or Duma experience of the past years, justify the boycott of the Bulygin and Witte Dumas, as

well as the participation in the Second Duma, and continue:

"At a time of acute and increasing reaction all this changes again. The Party cannot then carry out a big and spectacular election campaign, nor obtain worth-while parliamentary representation."

The first phrase with an independent idea not copied from old Bolshevik publications at once reveals to us the abysmal political thoughtlessness of the otzovists. Just reflect for a moment, good souls, at a time of acute and increasing reaction is it possible for the Party to organise in a "big and spectacular" way the "training groups and schools" for *boyeviks*[24a] that you speak about on the very same page, in the very same column of your literary production? Reflect for a moment, good souls, can the Party obtain "worth-while representation" in such schools? If you could think, if you were at all capable of political judgement, O you unjustly removed ones, you would see what absolute nonsense you are talking. Instead of *thinking* politically, you pin your faith to a "*spectacular*" signboard and so find yourselves in the role of Simple Simons of the Party. You babble about "training schools" and "intensifying [!] propaganda in the armed forces" (ibid.) because, like all the political infants in the camp of the otzovists and ultimatumists, you consider such activities to be particularly "spectacular", but you are incapable of thinking about the conditions for applying these forms of activity in practice (and not in words). You have *memorised* fragments of Bolshevik phrases and slogans but your *understanding* of them is precisely nil. "At a time of acute and increasing reaction" all work is *difficult* for the Party, but however great the difficulties, it is still *possible* to obtain worth-while parliamentary representation. This is proved too, for instance, by the experience of the German Social-Democrats in a period of "acute and increasing reaction" as during the introduction of the Anti-Socialist Law.[25] By denying this possibility Maximov and Co. only reveal their class political ignorance. To advocate "training schools" and "*intensification* of propaganda in the armed forces" "at a time of acute and increasing reaction" and at the same time to deny the possibility of the Party having worthwhile parliamentary representation is to utter obvious

incongruities which deserve to be published in an anthology of logical absurdities for junior high-school boys. Both training schools and the intensification of propaganda in the armed forces presuppose an inevitable violation of the old laws, breaking through these laws, whereas parliamentary activity by no means necessarily, or at any rate much more rarely, presupposes a breach of the old laws by the new social forces. Now reflect, good souls, when is it easier to force a breach of the old laws: at a time of acute and increasing reaction or when the movement is on the upgrade? Reflect, O unjustly removed ones, and be ashamed of the nonsense you utter in defending the otzovists, who are so dear to you.

Further. Which activity presupposes a wider scope for the energy of the masses, greater influence of the masses on immediate political life—parliamentary activity within the laws framed by the old regime, or propaganda among the troops, which at one stroke directly undermines this regime's material force? Reflect, good souls, and you will see that parliamentary activity takes second place in this respect. And what follows from this? It follows that the stronger the immediate movement of the masses, and the greater the scope of their energy, in other words: the more one can speak of an "acute and increasing" revolutionary onslaught of the people and not of "acute and increasing reaction", *all the more* possible, certain and successful will become both propaganda among the troops and militant actions that are really connected with the mass movement and are not merely the adventurism of unrestrained *boyeviks*. That, O unjustly removed ones, was the reason why Bolshevism could so powerfully develop both militant activities and propaganda among the troops in the period of "acute and increasing" revolutionary upsurge; that was the reason why the Bolsheviks could (beginning from 1907) dissociate, and by 1909 did completely dissociate their group from the *boyevism* that at a time of "acute and increasing reaction" *degenerated*, inevitably degenerated, into adventurism.

But with these heroes of ours, who have learned by heart fragments of Bolshevik phrases, it is the other way round. The highest forms of struggle, which have never anywhere in the world succeeded without a direct onslaught of the masses, are put in the forefront and recommended as "feasi-

ble" at a time of acute reaction, while the lower forms of struggle, which presuppose not so much a direct breach of the law by mass struggle as *utilisation* of the law for the purpose of propaganda and agitation, *preparing the minds* of the masses for struggle, are declared "unfeasible"!!

The otzovists and their "removed" echoers have heard, and committed to memory, that the Bolsheviks regard direct struggle of the masses, drawing into motion even the troops (i.e., the most obdurate section of the population, the slowest to move and most protected against propaganda, etc.) and converting armed outbreaks into the real beginning of an uprising, as the highest form of the movement, and parliamentary activity without the direct action of the masses as the lowest form of the movement. The otzovists and their echoers, such as Maximov, heard this and learned it by heart, but they did not understand it, and so disgraced themselves. The highest form—that means the most "spectacular"—thinks the otzovist and Comrade Maximov. Well, then, I'll raise a highly "spectacular" cry, that should produce the most revolutionary result of all. As for the meaning of it, that can be left to the devil!

Now listen to some more of Maximov's ideas (we continue the quotation from where we left off):

> "The mechanical force of reaction severs the connection of the already existing Party faction with the masses and makes it terribly difficult for the Party to influence them, with the result that this representative body is unable to conduct sufficiently broad and deep organisational and propaganda work in the interests of the Party. If the Party itself is weakened there is not excluded even the danger of degeneration of the faction and its deviation from the main line of Social-Democracy...."

In very truth, isn't that supremely pretty? When it is a matter of the lower, legal forms of struggle they try to frighten us: "the mechanical force of reaction", "unable to conduct sufficiently broad work", "the danger of degeneration". But when it is a matter of the higher forms of the class struggle, which force a breach in the old laws, the "mechanical force of reaction" disappears, there is no "inability" to conduct "sufficiently broad" work among the troops, and the "danger of degeneration" of training groups and schools, please observe, is altogether out of the question!

There you have the best justification of the editorial board of *Proletary*, why it had to *remove* political leaders who spread *such* ideas among the masses.

Get this into your heads, O unjustly removed ones: when the conditions of acute and increasing reaction are really present, when the mechanical force of this reaction really severs the connection with the masses, makes sufficiently broad work difficult and weakens the Party, it is then that the specific task of the Party becomes to master the parliamentary weapon of struggle; and that, O unjustly removed ones, is not because parliamentary struggle is higher than any other forms of struggle; no, it is just because it is *lower* than them, lower, for example, than a struggle which draws into the mass movement *even* the armed forces, which gives rise to mass strikes, uprisings, etc. Then why does mastery of the lowest form of struggle become the specific (i.e., distinguishing the present moment from other moments) task of the Party? Because the stronger the mechanical force of reaction and the weaker the connection with the masses, the more immediate becomes the task of preparing the minds of the masses (and not the task of direct action), the more immediate becomes the task of *utilising* the methods of propaganda and agitation *created by the old regime* (and not a direct onslaught of the masses against this old regime).

II

For any Marxist who has at all pondered over the philosophy of Marx and Engels, for any Social-Democrat who is at all acquainted with the history of the international socialist movement, this conversion of one of the lowest forms of struggle into the specific weapon of struggle of a special historic moment contains nothing surprising. The anarchists have absolutely never been able to understand this simple thing. Now our otzovists and their removed echoers are trying to introduce anarchist modes of thought among Russian Social-Democrats, crying out (like Maximov and Co.) that *Proletary* is dominated by the theory of "*parliamentarism at any price*".

To show how stupid and un-Social-Democratic these outcries of Maximov and Co. are, we shall once more have to

begin with the ABC. Just reflect, O unjustly removed ones, what is the specific difference between the policy and tactics of the German Social-Democrats and those of the socialist workers' parties in other countries? The utilisation of parliamentarism; the conversion of bourgeois Junker (approximate Russian equivalent: Octobrist-Black-Hundred) parliamentarism into an instrument for the socialist education and organisation of the mass of the workers. Does this mean that parliamentarism is the highest form of struggle of the socialist proletariat? Anarchists the world over think it does mean that. Does it mean that the German Social-Democrats stand for parliamentarism at any price? Anarchists the world over think it does mean that, and hence there is no enemy more hateful to them than German Social-Democracy, there is no target they love to aim at more than the German Social-Democrats. And in Russia, when our Socialist-Revolutionaries begin to flirt with the anarchists and advertise their own "revolutionary militancy" they never fail-to drag in real or imaginary errors of the German Social-Democrats, and draw conclusions from them to the detriment of Social-Democracy.

Now let us go further. In what lies the fallacy of the anarchists' argument? It lies in the fact that, owing to their radically incorrect ideas of the course of social development, they are unable to take into account those peculiarities of the concrete political (and economic) situation in different countries which determine the specific significance of one or another means of struggle *for a given period of time*. In point of fact the German Social-Democrats, far from standing for parliamentarism at any price, not only do not subordinate everything to parliamentarism, but, on the contrary, in the international army of the proletariat they best of all have developed such extra-parliamentary means of struggle as the socialist press, the trade unions, the systematic use of popular assemblies, the socialist education of youth, and so on and so forth.

What is the point then? The point is that a combination of a number of historic conditions has made parliamentarism a *specific* weapon of struggle for Germany over a *given period*, not the chief one, not the highest, not of prime and essential importance in comparison with other forms, but merely

specific, the most characteristic in comparison with other countries. Hence, the ability to use parliamentarism *has proved to be a symptom* (not a condition but a symptom) of exemplary organisation of the *entire* socialist movement, in *all* its branches, which we have enumerated above.

Let us turn from Germany to Russia. Anyone who presumed to draw an exact parallel between the conditions in these two countries would be guilty of a number of gross errors. But try to put the question as a Marxist is bound to do: what is the specific peculiarity of the policy and tactics of the Russian Social-Democrats at the present time? We must preserve and strengthen the illegal Party—just as before the revolution. We must steadily prepare the masses for a new revolutionary crisis—as in the years 1897-1903. We must strengthen to the utmost the Party's ties with the masses, develop and utilise all kinds of workers' organisations for the furtherance of the socialist cause, as has always been the practice of all Social-Democratic parties. The specific peculiarity of the moment is, namely, that the old autocracy is making an attempt (an unsuccessful attempt) to solve new historic problems with the help of the Octobrist-Black-Hundred Duma. Hence, the specific tactical task of the Social-Democrats is to use this Duma for *their own* purposes, for spreading the ideas of revolution and socialism. The point is not that this specific task is particularly lofty, that it opens grand vistas, or that it equals or even approaches in importance the tasks which faced the proletariat in, say, the period of 1905-06. No. The point is that it is a special feature of the tactics of the present moment, marking its distinction from the period that is past or from that which is yet to come (for this coming period will *certainly* bring us specific tasks, more complex, more lofty, more interesting than that of utilising the Third Duma). We cannot be equal to the present situation, we cannot solve the whole assemblage of problems with which it confronts the Social-Democratic Party, unless we solve this specific problem of the moment, unless we convert the Black-Hundred-Octobrist Duma into an *instrument* for Social-Democratic propaganda.

The otzovist windbags, taking their cue from the Bolsheviks, talk, for instance, of taking account of the experience of the revolution. But they do not understand what they

are talking about. They do not understand that taking account of the experience of the revolution *includes* defending the ideals and aims and methods of the revolution *from inside the Duma*. If we do not know how to *defend* these ideals, aims and methods from inside the Duma, through our working-class Party members who might enter and those who have already entered this Duma, it means that we are unable to make the *first* step towards politically taking account of the experience of the revolution (for what we are concerned with here is of course not a theoretical summing up of experience in books and researches). Our task is by no means ended by this first step. Incomparably more important than the first step will be the second and third steps, i.e., the conversion of the experience already gained by the masses into ideological stock-in-trade for new historic action. But if these otzovist windbags themselves speak of an "inter-revolutionary" period they should have understood (if they were able to think and reason things out in a Social-Democratic way) that "inter-revolutionary" signifies precisely that *elementary*, *preliminary tasks come on the order of the day*. "Inter-revolutionary" denotes an unsettled, indefinite situation when the old regime has become convinced that it is impossible to rule with the old instruments alone and *tries* to use a *new* instrument within the general framework of the old institutions. This is an internally contradictory, futile attempt, in which the autocracy is once more going towards inevitable failure, is once more leading us to a repetition of the glorious period and glorious battles of 1905. But it is going *not in the same way as* in 1897-1903, it is *leading* the people to revolution *not in the same way* as before 1905. It is this "not in the same way" that we must be able to understand; we must be able to modify our tactics, *supplementing* all the basic, general, primary and cardinal tasks of revolutionary Social-Democracy by one more task, not very ambitious, but a specific task of the present new period: the task of utilising the Black-Hundred Duma in a revolutionary Social-Democratic way.

Like any new task it seems more difficult than the others, because it requires of people not a simple repetition of slogans learned by heart (beyond which Maximov and the otzovists are mentally bankrupt), but a certain amount of initia-

tive, flexibility of mind, resourcefulness and independent work on a *novel* historical task. But in actual fact this task can appear particularly difficult only to people who are incapable of independent thought and independent effort: actually this task, like every specific task of a given moment, is easier than others because its solvability is determined entirely by the conditions of the given moment. In a period of "acute and increasing reaction" to solve the problem of organising "training schools and groups" in a really serious way, i.e., one that really connects them with the mass movement, that really subordinates them to it, is *quite impossible*, for it is a task set stupidly by people who have *copied* the formulation of it from a good pamphlet, which was based on the conditions of a *different* period. But to solve the problem of subordinating the speeches, actions and policy of the Social-Democrats in the Third Duma to the mass party and the interests of the masses *is possible*. It is not easy, compared with the "easy" matter of repeating things learned by heart, but it *can be done*. However we exert all the forces of the Party now, we cannot solve the problem of a Social-Democratic (and not anarchist) organisation of "training schools" at the present "inter-revolutionary" moment, for the solution of this problem requires altogether different historical conditions. On the contrary, by exerting all our forces we shall solve (and we are already *beginning to solve*) the problem of utilising the Third Duma in a revolutionary Social-Democratic way. And we shall do so, O you otzovists and ultimatumists wronged by removal and the harshness of God, not in order to put parliamentarism on some high pedestal, not to proclaim "parliamentarism at any price", but in order, *after* the solution of the "inter-revolutionary" problem, corresponding to the present "inter-revolutionary" period, to *proceed* to the solution of loftier revolutionary problems, which will correspond to the higher, i.e., more revolutionary period of tomorrow.

III

These stupid outcries of Maximov and Co. about the Bolsheviks' standing for "parliamentarism at any price", sound particularly queer in view of the actual history of

otzovism. What is queer is that the shout about exaggerated parliamentarism should come from the very people who have developed and are developing a special trend *exclusively* over the question of their attitude to parliamentarism! What do you call yourselves, dear Maximov and Co.? You call yourselves "otzovists", "ultimatumists", "boycottists". Maximov to this day is so proud of being a boycottist of the Third Duma that he can't get over it, and his rare Party utterances are invariably accompanied by the signature: "Reporter on behalf of the boycottists at the July Conference of 1907."[26] One writer in olden times used to sign himself: "Substantive state councillor and cavalier." Maximov signs himself: "Reporter on behalf of the boycottists"—he, too, is a cavalier, you see!

In the political situation of June 1907, when Maximov advocated the boycott, the mistake was still quite a small one. But when Maximov comes out in July 1909 with a manifesto of sorts and persists in admiring his "boycottism" in regard to the Third Duma, it is downright stupidity. Boycottism, otzovism and ultimatumism—all these expressions in themselves imply the formation of a *trend* over the question of the attitude to parliamentarism and *exclusively* over this question. To make a separate stand on this question, to persist (two years after the Party has settled it in principle!) in this separate stand, is a sign of unparalleled narrow-mindedness. It is just those who behave in this way, i.e., the "boycottists" (of 1909) and the otzovists and the ultimatumists, who prove *thereby* that they do not think like Social-Democrats, that they are putting parliamentarism on a special pedestal, that exactly like the anarchists they make a *trend* out of isolated formulas: boycott that Duma, recall your men from that Duma, present an ultimatum to that group in the Duma. To act like that is to be a caricature of a Bolshevik. Among Bolsheviks the trend is determined by their *common* attitude to the Russian revolution and the Bolsheviks have emphatically declared a thousand times (as it were to forewarn political infants) that to identify Bolshevism with boycottism or *boyevism* is a stupid distortion and vulgarisation of the views of revolutionary Social-Democracy. Our view that Social-Democratic participation in the Third Duma is obligatory, for

instance, follows *inevitably* from our attitude to the present moment, to the attempts of the autocracy to take a step forward along the path of creating a bourgeois monarchy, to the significance of the Duma as an organisation of counter-revolutionary classes in a representative institution on a national scale. Just as the anarchists display an inverted parliamentary cretinism when they *separate* the question of parliament from the whole question of bourgeois society in general and try to create a trend from outcries against bourgeois parliamentarism (although criticism of bourgeois parliamentarism is in principle on the same level as criticism of the bourgeois press, bourgeois syndicalism and so forth), so our otzovists, ultimatumists and boycottists, in exactly the same way, display inverted Menshevism when they *form a separate* trend on the question of the attitude to the Duma, on the question of methods of combating deviations on the part of the Social-Democratic group in the Duma (and not the deviations of bourgeois literati, who come into the Social-Democratic movement incidentally, and so on).

The climax of this inverted parliamentary cretinism is reached in the famous argument of the leader of the Moscow otzovists whom Maximov is shielding: the recall of the Duma group should serve to *emphasise* that the revolution is not dead and buried! And Maximov with pure and unruffled brow does not hesitate to declare publicly: "the otzovists have never (of course, *never*!) expressed anti-parliamentary sentiments at all."

This shielding of the otzovists by Maximov and Co. is one of the most characteristic features of the new faction and we must dwell on it in all the more detail because the unenlightened public is all too often taken in by our bitterly complaining removed ones. It consists firstly in the fact that Maximov and Co. are forever beating their breasts and protesting: we are not otzovists, we do not share the opinions of the otzovists at all! Secondly, Maximov and Co. accuse the Bolsheviks of *exaggerating* the fight against the otzovists. It is an *exact* repetition of the story of the attitude of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists (in the years 1897-1901) to the adherents of *Rabochaya Mysl*. "We are not Economists,"[27] cried the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, beating their breasts, "we do not share the views of *Rabochaya Mysl*, we are carrying

on a controversy with them (in just the same way as Maximov carried on a 'controversy' with the otzovists!), it is only those wicked Iskrists who have brought a false charge against us, slandered us, 'exaggerated' Economism, etc., etc." Thus among the supporters of *Rabochaya Mysl*—frank and honest Economists—there were not a few people who had genuinely gone astray, who had the courage of their convictions, whom it was impossible not to respect—while the *Rabocheye Dyelo* clique abroad specialised in definite intrigues, in covering up their tracks, in playing hide-and-seek and deceiving the public. The consistent and declared otzovists (like Vsev,[28] and Stan,[29] who are well known in Party circles) stand in exactly the same relation to Maximov's clique abroad.

We are not otzovists, cry the members of this clique. But make any of them say a few words about the contemporary political situation and the tasks of the Party and you will hear in full all the otzovist arguments, slightly watered down (as we have seen in the case of Maximov) by Jesuitical reservations, additions, suppressions, mitigations, confusions, etc. Your Jesuitry, O unjustly removed ones, cannot acquit you of the charge of otzovist stupidity, but aggravates your guilt tenfold, for an ideological confusion that is concealed is a hundred times more corrupting to the proletariat, a hundred times more harmful to the Party.*

We are not otzovists, cry Maximov and Co. Yet after June 1908, when he resigned from the small editorial board of *Proletary*, Maximov formed an official opposition inside the collegium, demanded and obtained freedom of discussion for this opposition, demanded and obtained special representation for the opposition in the organisation's chief executive bodies responsible for the circulation of the newspaper. It goes without saying that ever since that time,

* A little example which, by the way, serves to illustrate Maximov's assertion that only *Proletary* is spreading tales about the ultimatumists out of spite. In the autumn of 1908 Alexinsky appeared at the congress of the Polish Social-Democrats and there proposed an *ultimatumist* resolution. This was *before* "*Proletary*" embarked on a determined campaign against the new faction. And what happened? The Polish Social-Democrats ridiculed Alexinsky and his resolution, telling him: "You are nothing more than a cowardly otzovist."

i.e., for over a year all the otzovists have been in the ranks of this opposition, have jointly organised an agency in Russia, have jointly adapted the school abroad (of which more below) for the purposes of an agency, and so on and so forth.

We are not otzovists—cry Maximov and Co. Yet at the All-Russian Party Conference in December 1908, when the more honest otzovists of this opposition came out before the whole Party as a separate group, as a specific ideological trend, and, as such, received the right to put forward their spokesman (the Conference had decided that only separate ideological trends or separate organisations—time being short—could be represented by a separate spokesman), the *spokesman* from the otzovist faction—by sheer accident! sheer accident!—was *Comrade Maximov*....

This deception of the Party by harbouring otzovism is systematically pursued by Maximov's group abroad. In May 1908 otzovism suffered defeat in open battle: it was outvoted by 18 to 14 at the general city conference in Moscow (in July 1907, in this district almost all the Social-Democrats without exception were boycottists but, unlike Maximov, by June 1908 they had the sense to understand that it would be unpardonable stupidity to insist on "boycotting" the Third Duma). *After* this, Comrade Maximov organised abroad an official opposition to *Proletary* and began a controversy in the columns of the Bolshevik periodical, something which had never been practised before. Finally, in the *autumn* of 1908 when the *whole* St. Petersburg organisation divided into otzovists and non-zovists (the term coined by the workers) during the election of delegates to the All-Russian Conference, when discussions were held in *all* districts and subdistricts of St. Petersburg, not on the platform of Bolsheviks versus Mensheviks but on that of otzovists versus non-zovists, the *otzovists hid their platform from the eyes of the public*. It was not communicated to *Proletary*. It was not released for the press. It was not communicated to the Party at the All-Russian Conference of December 1908. *Only after the Conference*, on the insistent demand of the editorial board, was it communicated to us and we printed it in *Proletary* No. 44. ("Resolution of the St. Petersburg Otzovists".)

A well-known otzovist leader in Moscow Region "edited" an article by an otzovist worker, which was published in *Rabocheye Znamya*[30] No. 5, but we have still not received this leader's own platform. We know perfectly well that in the spring of 1909 when the regional conference of the Central Industrial Region was in preparation the otzovist leader's platform was being read and passed from hand to hand. We know from the reports of Bolsheviks that there were incomparably more gems of un-Social-Democratic thought in this platform than in the St. Petersburg platform. *But we were never supplied with the text of the platform*, probably for reasons just as accidental, purely accidental, as those which caused Maximov to address the conference as the spokesman of the otzovist faction.

The question of utilising legal opportunities, too, Maximov and Co. covered up by a "smooth" phrase: "It is taken for granted." It would be interesting to know if "it is taken for granted" now also by the practical leaders of the Maximov faction, *Comrade Lyadov and Stanislav, who only three months ago* caused a resolution *to be passed* in the Regional Bureau of the Central Industrial Region, which was then in their hands (the same Regional Bureau which endorsed the famous "school"; the membership of this Bureau has changed since), *against Social-Democratic participation in the congress of factory doctors*.[31] As we know this was the first congress at which the revolutionary Social-Democrats were in the majority. Yet all the prominent otzovists and ultimatumists campaigned against participation in this congress, declaring that it would be "treason to the cause of the proletariat" to take part in it. And Maximov covers up his tracks—"it is taken for granted". We may "take it for granted" that the franker otzovists and ultimatumists are openly disrupting practical work in Russia, while Maximov and Co. who are hankering for the laurels of Krichevsky and Martynov,[32] obscure the point at issue: there are no differences of opinion, no one is opposed to the idea of utilising legal opportunities.

The restoration of the Party bodies abroad, the foreign groups for the organisation of connections, etc., leads inevitably to a repetition of the old abuses which must be combated most relentlessly. It is a complete repetition of the

history of the Economists, who in Russia carried on a campaign against political action while they sheltered themselves abroad behind *Rabocheye Dyelo*. It is a complete repetition of the history of the bourgeois-democratic "Credo" (Credo—a symbol of faith), which was advocated in Russia by Prokopovich and Co. and was made public in the revolutionary Social-Democratic press *against the will of the authors*. Nothing could have a more demoralising influence on the Party than this game of hide-and-seek, this exploitation of the onerous conditions of illegal work to hold things back from Party publicity, this Jesuitry of Maximov and Co., who, while operating *wholly and in every respect* hand in glove with the otzovists, in print beat their breasts and declare that all this business of otzovism is a deliberate exaggeration on the part of *Proletary*.

We are not pettifoggers, we are not formalists, but revolutionaries. What matters to us is not the verbal distinctions which might be drawn between otzovism, ultimatumism, and "boycottism" (of the Third Duma), but the actual content of Social-Democratic propaganda and agitation. And if views which have nothing in common with Bolshevism nor with Social-Democracy in general are being propagated in illegal Russian circles under the mask of Bolshevism, those persons who are hindering a full exposure of these views and a full explanation of their falsity before the whole Party are acting as enemies of the proletariat.

IV

These people have also disclosed themselves on the question of god-building. The enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* adopted and published two resolutions on this question: one on the principle involved, the other with special reference to Maximov's protest. The question arises, what does this same Maximov say now in his "Report"? He writes his "Report" in order to cover up his tracks exactly in the style of the diplomat who said that language was given to man so as to hide his thoughts.[33] We are told that "wrong information" is being spread about the "so-called god-building" trend of Maximov's clique, and that is all.

"Wrong information" do you say? Oh no, my dear fellow, it is just because you know perfectly well that the "information" in *Proletary* on god-building is absolutely correct that you have been covering up the tracks. You know perfectly well that this "information", as is stated in the published resolution, refers primarily to the literary productions emanating from *your* literary clique. These literary productions are very exactly *specified* in our resolution; one thing alone being omitted, which could not be added in the resolution, namely, that for about a year and a half the strongest resentment against the "god-building" of your confrères has been expressed in leading Bolshevik circles, and it is on these grounds (besides those stated above) that the new faction of caricature Bolsheviks has been poisoning for us, by means of evasions, artifices, pin-pricks, objections and quibbles, every opportunity of working. One of the most notable of these quibbles is particularly well known to Maximov because it was a *protest* in writing lodged in due form with the editors of *Proletary* against the publication of an article entitled "Our Ways Part" (*Proletary* No. 42). Perhaps this too is "wrong information", O unjustly removed ones? Perhaps this too was only a "so-called protest"?

No, let me tell you that the policy of covering up tracks does not always succeed and you will never succeed with it in our Party. It is no use playing hide-and-seek and by putting on airs trying to make a secret of something which everybody knows who takes an interest in Russian literature and Russian Social-Democracy. There is a literary clique who, with the help of several bourgeois publishers, are flooding our legal literature with systematic propaganda of god-building. Maximov too belongs to this clique. This propaganda has become systematic precisely in the past eighteen months, when the Russian bourgeoisie for its counter-revolutionary purposes felt a need to revive religion, increase the demand for religion, invent religion, inoculate the people with religion or strengthen the hold of religion on them in new forms. Hence the preaching of god-building has acquired a social, political character. Just as the bourgeois press in the period of the revolution fondled and petted the most zealous of the Mensheviks for their pro-Cadetism, so in the period of counter-revolution the bourgeois press is

fondling and petting the god-builders in the ranks—it is no joke!—in the ranks of the Marxists and even in the ranks of the "also-Bolsheviks". And when the official organ of Bolshevism stated in an editorial that Bolshevism had *nothing in common* with such propaganda (this statement was issued in the press after endless persuasion in letters and personal conversations had failed to stop this disgraceful propaganda), Comrade Maximov lodged a formal, written protest with the editorial board of *Proletary*. He, Maximov, had been elected by the London Congress,[34] hence his "acquired right" was being violated by those who dared to officially repudiate the disgraceful doctrine of god-building. "Why, is our faction in bondage to the god-building literati?" This was the remark that *Comrade Marat*[35] let slip during a stormy scene in the editorial office—yes, yes, the very same Comrade Marat who is so modest, so well-meaning, so peaceable and so good-hearted that he cannot properly decide to this very day whether to go with the Bolsheviks or the godly otzovists.

Or is this perhaps also a piece of "wrong information", O unjustly removed Maximov? There is no clique of god-building literati, you never defended them, you never protested against the article "Our Ways Part"? eh?

Of "wrong information" on the god-building trend Comrade Maximov speaks in his "Report" concerning the *school abroad* which is being held by the new faction. Comrade Maximov is so emphatic about this being "the *first* [Maximov's italics] Party school to be held abroad" and is so bent on misleading the public on this question, that we shall have to speak of the notorious "school" in greater detail.

Comrade Maximov bitterly complains:

> "Not a single attempt, not only to lend support to the school but even to take control over it, was made by the editorial board (of *Proletary*); while spreading false information about the school derived from unknown sources, the editorial board did not address a single enquiry to the organisers of the school to verify this information. Such was the attitude of the editorial board to the whole affair."

So. So. "Not a single attempt even to take control over the school."... In this phrase Maximov's Jesuitry goes so far that it exposes itself.

Remember, reader, Yerogin's hostel in the period of the First Duma. A retired rural superintendent (or some bureau-

cratic knight of the same nature) Yerogin opened a hostel in St. Petersburg for peasant deputies coming in from the country, his desire being to lend support to the "plans of the government". The inexperienced peasants on arriving in the capital were intercepted by Yerogin's agents and directed to Yerogin's hostel, where, of course, they found a *school* in which the heretical doctrines of the "Lefts" were refuted, in which the Trudoviks, etc., were covered with obloquy, and in which the new-fledged Duma members were schooled in "true Russian" statecraft. Fortunately, since the State Duma was held in St. Petersburg it was in St. Petersburg that Yerogin had to organise his hostel, and as St. Petersburg is a centre with a fair breadth and freedom of ideological and political life Yerogin's deputies, of course, very soon began to desert Yerogin's hostel and transfer to the camp of the Trudoviks or the independent deputies. Thus Yerogin's little intrigue resulted only in disgrace, both for himself and the government.

Now imagine, reader, that a Yerogin hostel like this is organised, not in some foreign St. Petersburg, but in some foreign equivalent of Tsarevokokshaisk.[36] If you grant this hypothesis, you will have to agree that the otzovist-god-building Yerogins have used their knowledge of Europe to prove themselves more cunning than the true-blue Russian Yerogin. People calling themselves Bolsheviks set up an exchequer of their own—independent of what, as far as we know, is the one and only general Bolshevik exchequer, out of which comes the cost of publishing and circulating *Proletary*—organised an agency of their own, shipped some of "their" agitators to Tsarevokokshaisk, sent out there some workers belonging to the Social-Democratic Party and proclaimed this (hidden away from the Party in Tsarevokokshaisk) Yerogin hostel the "*first* Party" (party, because it is hidden from the Party) "school abroad".

We hasten to make the reservation—since the removed Comrade Maximov has so vigorously raised the question whether his removal was regular or irregular (of this, later)—that there is nothing at all "irregular" in the actions of the otzovist-god-building Yerogins. Nothing whatsoever. Everything there is quite regular. It is quite regular for kindred spirits in a party to form a group together. It is quite

regular for these kindred spirits to collect a fund and start some joint enterprise of propaganda and agitation. It is quite regular that in this instance they should wish to choose as the form of their enterprise, say, not a newspaper, but a "school". It is quite regular that they should consider it an official Party affair, so long as it is organised by members of the Party and so long as there is a Party organisation, no matter which, assuming political and ideological responsibility for the enterprise. Everything is quite regular here and everything would be quite all right if ... if there were no Jesuitry, no hypocrisy, no deception of your own Party.

Is it not a deception of the Party if you publicly emphasise that the school is a Party affair, i.e., if you restrict yourself to the question of its formal legitimacy and *do not give the names* of the initiators and organisers of the school, i.e., you keep silent about the ideological and political trend of the school as the undertaking of a *new faction* in our Party? There have been two "documents" about this school in the possession of the editors of *Proletary* (for over a year now relations between the editorial board and Maximov have been carried on entirely through the medium of "documents" and diplomatic notes). The first document bore no signature, nobody's signature at all. It was merely an abstract statement of the virtue of education and the educational value of institutions called schools. The second document was signed by figure-heads. Now, coming out in print before the public with praise of the "first Party school abroad" Comrade Maximov, as before, *keeps silent* about the *factional* character of the school.

This policy of Jesuitry is harmful to the Party. We shall expose this "policy". The initiators and organisers of the school are *in actual fact* Comrades "Er"[37] (thus we will name the leader the Moscow otzovists well known to all Party members, who delivered lectures on the school, organised a circle of pupils and was appointed to the roster of lecturers by several workers' circles), Maximov, Lunacharsky, Lyadov, Alexinsky *and so on and so forth*. We do not know and we are not interested in knowing what particular part was played by one or other of the abovementioned comrades, what places they occupy in the various official institutions of the school, in its "Council", "execu-

tive commission", collegium of lecturers, etc. We do not know which "non-factional" comrades might supplement this clique in one or another particular case. All this is quite unimportant. What we assert is that the *actual* ideological and political trend of this school, as a new factional centre, is *determined* **precisely** by the names enumerated and that by concealing this from the Party Maximov is conducting a policy of Jesuitry. What is bad is not that a new factional centre has come into being in the Party—we by no means belong to the class of people who are not averse to making a little political capital out of cheap and fashionable outcries against factionalism—on the contrary, it is a good thing that a distinctive shade of opinion, once it exists, should be able to have its special expression in the Party. What is bad is the deception of the Party and the workers who—naturally—sympathise with the idea of any *school*, as they do with any educational undertaking.

Is it not hypocrisy when Comrade Maximov complains to the public that the editorial board of *Proletary* had not "even" ("*even*!") the desire "to take control over the school"? Only think: in June *1908* Comrade Maximov left the small editorial board of *Proletary*; since that time internal strife has gone on almost continuously in a *thousand* different forms in the Bolshevik group; Alexinsky abroad, "Er" and Co. abroad and in Russia, repeat after Maximov all the arrant nonsense of the otzovists and god-builders against *Proletary* in a thousand different tones. Maximov lodges written and formal protests against the article "Our Ways Part"; everybody who knows anything of Party affairs if only by hearsay speaks of a coming inevitable split in the ranks of the Bolsheviks (it suffices to point out that the *Menshevik Dan* at the All-Russian Conference of December 1908 declared for all to hear, at an official gathering: "Who does not know that the Bolsheviks are now accusing Lenin of betraying Bolshevism"!)—yet Comrade Maximov, playing the role of an innocent, absolutely innocent, child, asks the honourable public, why is it that the editorial board of *Proletary* did not "even" want to take control over a Party school in god-building Tsarevokokshaisk? "Control" over the school! Supporters of *Proletary* in the capacity of "*inspectors*", sitting in at the lectures of Maximov, Lunacharsky, Ale-

xinsky and Co.!! Come now, why do you play this unbecoming, this disgraceful farce? For what purpose? Why throw dust in the eyes of the public by circulating meaningless "programmes" and "reports" of the "school" instead of admitting frankly and openly who are the ideological leaders and inspirers of the new factional centre!

For what purpose?—we shall answer this question presently, but first let us finish with the question of the school: There is room for Tsarevokokshaisk in St. Petersburg and it can be transferred (most of it, anyway) to St. Petersburg, but St. Petersburg can neither be accommodated in nor transferred to Tsarevokokshaisk. The more energetic and independent of the students at the new Party school will manage to find their way from the narrow new faction to the broad Party, from the "science" of the otzovists and god-builders to the science of Social-Democracy in general and Bolshevism in particular. As for those who prefer to limit themselves to a Yerogin education, nothing can be done with them. The editorial board of *Proletary* is prepared to give and will give *every possible* assistance to *all* workers, whatever their views, if they want to migrate (or travel) from the foreign Tsarevokokshaisk to the foreign St. Petersburg and acquaint themselves with Bolshevik views. The hypocritical policy of the organisers and initiators of the "*first Party* school abroad", however, we shall expose before the whole Party.

V

What is the purpose of all this hypocrisy of Maximov's, we asked, and deferred our reply until we had finished talking about the school. But, strictly speaking, the question to be cleared up here is not "for what purpose", but "why?" It would be wrong to think that all the members of the new faction are conducting a hypocritical policy deliberately for a definite purpose. No. The fact is that in the very situation of this faction, in the conditions in which it has appeared and is active, there are causes (which many otzovists and god-builders are not conscious of) that give rise to a hypocritical policy.

There is an old saying to the effect that hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue. But this saying refers to the sphere of personal ethics. As applied to ideological and political trends it must be said that hypocrisy is the screen adopted by groups that are internally not homogeneous, that are made up of assorted elements, accidentally thrown together, who feel that they are too weak for open, straightforward action.

The composition of the new faction is the determining factor that made it adopt this screen. The general staff of the faction of godly otzovists consists of unrecognised philosophers, ridiculed god-builders, otzovists convicted of anarchistic nonsense and reckless revolutionary phrasemongering, muddled ultimatumists and, lastly, those *boyeviks* (fortunately few in the Bolshevik faction) who considered it below their dignity to come down from the outwardly showy and "spectacular" to obscure, modest revolutionary Social-Democratic work corresponding to the conditions and tasks of the "inter-revolutionary" period, and on whom Maximov bestows honours by his "spectacular" phrases about training schools and groups ... in 1909. The only thing that holds these diverse elements so strongly together at the present moment is—a burning hatred to *Proletary*, a hatred it has quite properly incurred, because *not a single* attempt by these elements to obtain self-expression in *Proletary*, or even indirect recognition or the slightest defence and condonation, *has ever failed to encounter the most strenuous opposition*.

"Abandon hope for ever"—that was what *Proletary* told these elements in every issue, at every meeting of the editorial board, in every declaration on every Party question of the day.

And when (due to the objective conditions of the development of our revolution and the counter-revolution in our country) it came about that god-building and the theoretical foundations of Marxism became the questions of the day in the literary sphere, and the utilisation of the Third Duma and of the Third Duma platform by the Social-Democratic Party in the sphere of political work, these elements rallied together and the natural and inevitable explosion took place.

Like any explosion it was instantaneous, not in the sense that there had been previously no signs of such tendencies, or isolated manifestations of them, but in the sense that the political fusion of diverse tendencies, including some very remote from politics, took place almost in a flash. Hence the general public, as always, is inclined to be satisfied primarily with a *philistine* explanation of the new split, one imputing it to the bad qualities of one or another of the leaders, the influence of life abroad, parochialism and so on and so forth. There is no doubt that the location abroad, which, due to objective conditions, became the inevitable base of operations of all the central revolutionary organisations, has left its imprint on the *form* of the split. There is no doubt that its *form* was also affected by the idiosyncrasies of the literary circle *one wing* of which came into the Social-Democratic movement. What we call a philistine explanation is not one that takes note of these circumstances, which can explain nothing but the form, the occasions and the "external history" of the split, but one that is based on refusal or incapacity to understand the *ideological and political* foundations, causes and roots of the divergence.

The new faction's failure to understand these foundations is also the reason why it has resorted to the old method of camouflage, covering up tracks, denying the *inseparable* connection with otzovism, etc. The failure to understand these foundations causes the new faction to *speculate on a philistine explanation of the split and on philistine sympathy.*

What indeed is it but speculation on philistine sympathy to weep publicly about being "ousted" and "removed" as Maximov and Co. are doing now? Bestow the charity of your sympathy, for Christ's sake, on the ousted, the unjustly removed ones.... That this is a method counting with infallible certainty on *philistine* sympathy is proved by the curious fact that *even* Comrade Plekhanov, the enemy of all god-building, all "new" philosophy, all otzovism and ultimatumism, etc., *even* Comrade Plekhanov bestowed his mite of sympathy for Christ's sake, taking advantage of Maximov's whining, and over and over again called the Bolsheviks "stiff-necked" in this connection (see Plekhanov's *Dnevnik Sotsial-Demokrata*, August 1909). If Maximov has even managed to extract a mite of sympathy

from Plekhanov, you can imagine, reader, what tears of sympathy for Maximov will be shed by the philistine elements inside and on the fringe of the Social-Democratic movement over the "ousting" and "removal" of the virtuous, well-meaning and modest otzovists and god-builders.

The question of this "ousting" and "removal" is *treated* by Comrade Maximov both from its formal aspect and with regard to the essence of the matter. Let us examine this treatment.

From the formal point of view the removal of Maximov was "irregular", say the removed ones, and "we do not recognise this removal", for Maximov was "elected by the Bolshevik congress, i.e., the Bolshevik section of the Party Congress". Reading Maximov and Nikolayev's leaflet, the public sees a grave accusation ("irregular removal") without being given either an exact formulation of it or material from which to judge the matter. But that is the invariable method of a certain side during splits abroad: to obscure the divergence of principle, to draw a veil over it, to keep silent about the ideological dissensions, to conceal their ideological friends, and to make as much noise as possible about organisational conflicts, which the public is not in a position to analyse exactly and has not the right to sort out in detail. That was how the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists behaved in 1899, with their outcry that there was no Economism in any shape or form, but that Plekhanov had stolen the press. That was how the Mensheviks behaved in 1903 with their outcry that they had made no turn whatsoever to *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ism but that Lenin had "ousted" or "removed" Potresov, Axelrod and Zasulich, etc. That is the behaviour of people who are speculating on elements abroad who are fond of rows and sensations. There is no otzovism, nor any god-building, but there is the "irregular removal" of Maximov "by the majority of the editorial board", who want to "*leave at their full disposal*" "*the property of the whole faction*"—come into the shop, gentlemen, we will tell you something most spicy about this business....

An old device, Comrades Maximov and Nikolayev! And the politicians who resort to it are *bound* to break their necks.

Our "victims of removal" talk of "irregularity" because in their opinion the editorial board of *Proletary* has no right to decide the question of the fate of the Bolshevik faction and of the split in its ranks. Very well, gentlemen. If the editorial board of *Proletary* and the 15 Bolshevik members and candidate members of the Central Committee elected at the London Congress have not the right to represent the Bolshevik faction you have every opportunity to make a public declaration to that effect and conduct a campaign for the overthrow of these undesirable representatives or for new elections to replace them. *But you have indeed conducted such a campaign* and only after you had met with a certain number of reverses did you prefer to complain and whine. If you raised the question of a congress or conference of Bolsheviks, Comrades Maximov and Nikolayev, then why did you not tell the public that *several months ago* Comrade "Er" submitted a draft resolution to the Moscow Committee calling for a vote of no confidence in *Proletary* and the holding of a Bolshevik conference to elect a new ideological centre for the Bolsheviks?

Why did you keep silent about this, O wrongly removed ones?

Why did you keep silent about the fact that "Er's" resolution was rejected by every vote except his own?

Why did you keep silent about the fact that in the autumn of 1908 in the whole St. Petersburg organisation from top to bottom a struggle was going on over the platforms of the two trends of Bolshevism, the otzovists and the opponents of otzovism, and that the otzovists were defeated?

Maximov and Nikolayev want to whine to the public because they have been repeatedly defeated in Russia. Both "Er" and the St. Petersburg otzovists had the right to wage a struggle against Bolshevism, in the highest down to the lowest organisations, without waiting for any conference and *without making public* their platforms before the whole Party.

But had not the *Proletary* editorial board, which declared open war on otzovism from June 1908, the right after a year of strife, a year of controversy, a year of friction, conflict, etc., after it had invited three regional delegates from

Russia and consulted several Russian members of the enlarged editorial board, who had not taken part in a single conflict abroad, had it not the right to declare *what was a matter of fact*, to declare that *Maximov had split away from the board*, to declare that Bolshevism has nothing in common with otzovism, ultimatumism and god-building?

Stop this hypocrisy, gentlemen! You fought on what you thought was your strongest ground and you suffered defeat. You went preaching otzovism to the masses in spite of a decision of the official centre of the Bolsheviks and without waiting for a special conference. And now you start whining and complaining because you found yourselves in a ludicrously small minority on the enlarged editorial board, at the conference held with the participation of regional delegates!

Here again we have a device of Russians abroad exactly after the manner of *Rabocheye Dyelo*: playing at "democracy" when the conditions for complete democracy are absent, speculating on the inflammation of all kinds of discontent "abroad" and at the same time transmitting from abroad (through the "school") your otzovist and god-building propaganda—starting a split among the Bolsheviks, and afterwards moaning about a split—forming a private faction (under cover of a "school") and shedding crocodile tears over the "splitting" policy of *Proletary*.

No, this squabble has gone on long enough! A faction is a free union of *kindred minds* within a party and after over a year of strife both in Russia and abroad we had a perfect right, we had the duty, to make a definite decision. And we have done so. You have a perfect right to oppose it, to put forward your platform and try to win a majority for it. If you do not do so, if instead of forming an open alliance with the otzovists and putting forward a common platform you persist in playing hide-and-seek and speculating on a cheap "democracy" abroad, you will get nothing in return but the contempt you deserve.

You are playing a double game. On the one hand, you declare that for a whole year *Proletary* has been "wholly" pursuing a non-Bolshevik policy (and your supporters in Russia have tried *more than once* to gain acceptance for these views in resolutions of the St. Petersburg Committee

and the Moscow Committee). On the other hand, you bewail the split and refuse to recognise the "removal". On the one hand, you are *in fact* hand in glove with the otzovists and god-builders, on the other you repudiate them and pose as peacemakers who want to make peace between the Bolsheviks and the otzovists and god-builders.

"Abandon hope for ever!" You can try to win a majority. You can gain what victories you like among immature Bolshevik members. We shall not agree to any reconciliation. Form your faction, or rather: go on forming it, since you have already begun, but do not try to deceive the Party, do not try to deceive the Bolsheviks. All the conferences and congresses in the world are powerless now to reconcile the Bolsheviks with the otzovists, the ultimatumists and the god-builders. We have said and we repeat it once again: every Bolshevik Social-Democrat and every class-conscious worker must make his fixed and final choice.

VI

Concealing their ideological kin, afraid to declare their real platform, the new faction is trying to fill up the gaps in its ideological stock-in-trade by borrowing *words* from the vocabulary of old splits. The "new *Proletary*", the "new *Proletary* line", shout Maximov and Nikolayev imitating the fight against the new *Iskra* in the old days.

It is a trick that might beguile certain political infants.

But you are not even capable of repeating old words, gentlemen. The "point" of the slogan "against the new *Iskra*" was that when the Mensheviks took over *Iskra* they themselves *had* to start a new line of policy, whereas the Congress (the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903) had endorsed the line of the old *Iskra*. The "point" was that the Mensheviks (through the mouth of *Trotsky* in 1903-04) had to declare: the old *Iskra* and the new are poles apart. And to this day Potresov and Co. are trying to remove from themselves the "traces" of the period when they were guided by the old *Iskra*.

Proletary is now in its 47th issue. The first came out exactly three years ago, in August 1906. In this *first* issue of

Proletary, dated August 21, 1906, we find an *editorial* article "The Boycott" and it states in black and white: "*The time has now come when the revolutionary Social-Democrats must cease to be boycottists.*"* Since that time there has not been a single issue of *Proletary* containing *even one line of print* in favour of "boycottism" (after 1906), otzovism and ultimatumism, without a refutation of this *caricature of Bolshevism*. And now the caricature Bolsheviks are getting on stilts and trying to compare themselves with those who *first* fought the three-year campaign of the old *Iskra* and secured the endorsement of its line by the Second Party Congress and *then* exposed, the *volte-face* of the new *Iskra*!

Comrade Maximov now signs himself "Former editor of the popular workers' newspaper *Vperyod*", wanting to remind the reader that it was said "geese saved Rome". "Your relation to the policy of *Vperyod*,"[38] we tell Maximov in reply to this reminder, was exactly the same as Potresov's relation to the old *Iskra*. Potresov was its editor, but he did not lead the old *Iskra*, the old *Iskra* led him. As soon as he sought to change the policy the supporters of the old *Iskra* turned their backs on him. And now even Potresov himself is making frantic efforts to blot out the "sin of his youth", his participation in the editorship of the old *Iskra*.

Maximov did not lead *Vperyod*, but *Vperyod* led him. Proof: the policy of boycotting the Third Duma, in support of which *Vperyod* did not and could not say a *single word*. Maximov acted very wisely and well when he allowed himself to be led by *Vperyod*. Now he has begun to think up (or, what comes to the same thing, to help the otzovists to think up) a *line of policy* that is inevitably leading him into the morass, just like Potresov.

Remember this, Comrade Maximov: the basis one should take for comparison is the integrity of an ideological and political trend, not "words" and "slogans", which some people *learn by heart* without understanding their meaning. Bolshevism ran the old *Iskra* for three years, from 1900 to 1903, and emerged as an integral trend for the struggle with Menshevism. The Mensheviks persisted for a long time in their new alliance with the anti-Iskrists and the support-

* See present edition, Vol. 11, p. 145.—*Ed.*

ers of *Rabocheye Dyelo* until finally they surrendered Potresov (and only Potresov?) to Prokopovich. The Bolsheviks ran the "old" *Proletary* (1906-09) in a spirit of resolute opposition to "boycottism", etc., and emerged as an integral trend for the struggle against those who are now thinking up "otzovism", "ultimatumism", "god-building", etc. The Mensheviks wanted to reform the old *Iskra* in the spirit of Martynov and the Economists, and they broke their necks in the attempt. You want to reform the old *Proletary* in the spirit of "Er", the otzovists and the god-builders—and you will break your necks too.

But what about the "turn towards Plekhanov", says Maximov triumphantly? What about the formation of a "new Centrist faction"? And our "also-Bolshevik" describes as "diplomacy" a "denial" that "the realisation of the idea of a 'centrist group' is being contemplated!"

These cries which Maximov is uttering against "diplomacy" and "uniting with Plekhanov" are simply laughable. Here, too, the caricature Bolsheviks are true to themselves: they have firmly *learned by heart* that Plekhanov pursued an ultra-opportunist policy in 1906-07. And they think that if they repeat it rather frequently, without bothering to analyse the changes that are taking place, this will denote the maximum degree of "revolutionary spirit".

The fact of the matter is that starting from the London Congress the "diplomats" of *Proletary* always openly pursued and succeeded in carrying out a pro-Party policy against the grotesque exaggerations of factionalism, a policy of defending Marxism against anti-Marxist criticism. There are two reasons for Maximov's present outcries: on the one hand, ever since the London Congress there have always been individual Bolsheviks (Alexinsky is an example) alleging that a policy of "conciliation", a "Polish-Lettish" policy, etc., has been substituted for a policy of Bolshevism. These stupid allegations, which were merely evidence of bigoted thinking, were seldom taken seriously by the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, the literary clique to which Maximov belongs and which has never at any time had more than one foot in the Social-Democratic movement, has for a long time regarded Plekhanov as the chief enemy of their god-building and suchlike tendencies. In the eyes of this clique nothing

is more terrible than Plekhanov. Nothing is more destructive to *their* hope of inculcating their ideas into the workers' party than "uniting with Plekhanov".

And now these two elements: bigoted factionalism with its incomprehension of the tasks of the Bolshevik faction in forming the Party, and the god-builders of the literary circles and apologists of god-building, have come together on the "platform": *against* "union with Plekhanov", against the "conciliatory", "Polish-Lettish" policy of *Proletary*, etc.

Plekhanov's *Dnevnik* No. 9, which is now out, makes it unnecessary for us to explain to the reader in special detail what a caricature this "platform" of the caricature Bolsheviks is. Plekhanov exposed the liquidationism of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, the diplomacy of its editors and declared that his "way parted" with Potresov, who had ceased to be a revolutionary. It is clear now to every Social-Democrat that *working-class* Mensheviks will go with Plekhanov against Potresov. It should be clear to everyone that the split among the Mensheviks vindicates the policy of the Bolsheviks. It is clear to everyone that Plekhanov's declaration of the pro-*Party* line of policy against the splitting tactics of the liquidators is a *tremendous* victory for Bolshevism, which now holds the predominant position in the Party.

Bolshevism has won this tremendous victory because it pursued its pro-Party policy *in spite of* the outcries of the immature "Lefts" and god-building literati. Only such people as these can be afraid of a rapprochement with the Plekhanov who exposes and expels the Potresovs from the workers' party. Only in the stagnant bog of the god-builders' circle or of the heroes of phrases learned by heart is there any chance of success for a "platform": "Against union with Plekhanov", *that is to say*, against rapprochement with the pro-Party Mensheviks for the struggle against liquidationism, against rapprochement with the orthodox Marxists (which is disadvantageous to the clique of literary Yerogins), against the winning of further Party support for revolutionary Social-Democratic policy and tactics.

We Bolsheviks can point to great achievements in winning such support. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Kautsky—Social-Democrats who often write for Russians and to that extent are in our Party—have been won over to our point of view,

although at the beginning of the split (1903) their sympathies were entirely with the Mensheviks. They were won over because the Bolsheviks made no concessions to "criticism" of Marxism, because the Bolsheviks upheld, not the letter of *their own*, definitely *their own* factional theory, but the general spirit and meaning of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics. We shall continue to advance along this path, we shall wage an even more relentless war against pedantic stupidity and reckless phrase-mongering with phrases learned by heart, against the theoretical revisionism of the god-building circle of literati.

Two liquidationist trends have now quite clearly materialised among the Russian Social-Democrats: Potresov's and Maximov's. Potresov is necessarily afraid of the Social-Democratic Party because henceforth there is no hope of *his* line being adopted by it. Maximov is necessarily afraid of the Social-Democratic Party because there is now no hope of *his* line being adopted by it. Both the one and the other will support and shield by fair means or by foul the escapades of the separate literary circles with their peculiar forms of revision of Marxism: Both the one and the other will clutch, as the last shadow of hope, at the preservation of the circle spirit against the Party spirit, for Potresov can still win occasional victories in a select company of bigoted Mensheviks, Maximov can still gain an occasional laurel wreath from circles of especially bigoted Bolsheviks, but neither the one nor the other will ever obtain a firm footing whether among Marxists or in a really Social-Democratic workers' party. They represent two opposite, but mutually complementary, equally limited, petty-bourgeois trends in the Social-Democratic movement.

VII

We have shown what the general staff of the new faction is like. Where can its army be recruited from? From the bourgeois-democratic elements who attached themselves to the workers' party during the revolution. The proletariat everywhere is constantly being recruited from the petty bourgeoisie, is everywhere constantly connected with it

through thousands of transitional stages, boundaries and gradations. When a workers' party grows very quickly (as ours did in 1905-06) its penetration by a mass of elements imbued with a petty-bourgeois spirit is inevitable. And there is nothing bad about that. The historic task of the proletariat is to assimilate, re-school, re-educate all the elements of the old society that the latter bequeaths it in the shape of offshoots of the petty bourgeoisie. But the proletariat must re-educate these newcomers and influence them, not be influenced by them. Of the "Social-Democrats of the days of freedom", who first became Social-Democrats in the days of enthusiasm and celebration, the days of clarion slogans, the days of proletarian victories which turned the heads of even purely bourgeois intellectuals, very many began to *study in earnest*, to study Marxism and to learn persistent proletarian work—they will always remain Social-Democrats and Marxists. Others did not succeed in gaining, or were incapable of gaining, anything from the proletarian party but a few texts and "striking" slogans learned by heart, a few phrases about "boycottism", "*boyevism*", and so forth. When such elements thought to foist their "theories", their world outlook, i.e., their short-sighted views, on the workers' party, a split with them became inevitable.

The fate of the boycottists of the Third Duma is an obvious example that admirably shows the difference between the two elements.

The majority of the Bolsheviks, sincerely carried away by the desire for a direct and immediate fight against the heroes of June 3, were inclined to boycott the Third Duma, but were very soon able to cope with the new situation. They did not go repeating words learned by heart but attentively studied the new historical conditions, pondered over the question why events had gone that way and not otherwise, worked with their heads, not merely with their tongues, carried out serious and persistent proletarian work, and they very quickly realised the utter stupidity, the utter paltriness of otzovism. Others clutched at words, began to concoct "their own line" from half-digested phrases, to shout about "boycottism, otzovism, ultimatumism", to substitute these cries for the proletarian revolutionary work which the given historical conditions dictated, and to collect a new faction

from all sorts of immature elements in the ranks of Bolshevism. Good riddance to you, my friends? We have done everything we could to teach you Marxism and Social-Democratic work. Now we declare the most ruthless and irreconcilable war on the liquidators, both of the Right and of the Left, who are corrupting the workers' party by theoretical revisionism and petty-bourgeois methods of policy and tactics.

Supplement to *Proletary*
No. 47-48,
September 11 (24), 1909

Published according to
the Supplement to *Proletary*

NOTAS DE UN PUBLICISTA (1)

El suplemento al número 47-48 de El Proletario estuvo lejos de obtener inmediatamente un pleno éxito: en muchas organizaciones, sin excluir San Petersburgo, los obreros estimaban que no debía hacerse una guerra tan encarnizada al ultimatismo. En la escuela de Capri ese suplemento suscitó una violenta discusión: Bogdánov redactó, como respuesta, una "plataforma" que fué aceptada por la mayoría de los alumnos y de los profesores; un pequeño grupo de alumnos, por el contrario, se declaró "leninista", y, por iniciativa de Lenin y del "centro bolchevista", se trasladó a París, donde se había organizado una serie de cursos "ortodoxos" por Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Losovski.

Los otzovistas, ultimatistas y "constructores de Dios" de Capri decidieron entonces unirse más estrechamente; el 28 de diciembre de 1909 escribían al Comité central para anunciarle la formación del grupo Vperiod, cuya legalización en el partido "como organización literaria" solicitaban. Entre los firmantes se encontraban Volski, Gorki, Lunacharski, Liádov, Bogdánov. A la demanda se agregaba la plataforma redactada por Bogdánov, en forma de un folleto intitulado: La situación actual y los objetivos del partido.

Al mismo tiempo que reconocían la perturbación producida en el partido por el brusco paso de una acción semilegal a la completa ilegalidad y la importancia demasiado exclusiva otorgada por las instituciones centrales a las querellas de fracciones, los antores anunciaban su intención de "luchar por restablecer la unidad del bolchevismo". Todo el mal venía, según ellos, de la influencia "del viejo mundo campesino y burgués", en particular de la costumbre difundida entre los militantes de fiarse ciegamente de ciertas autoridades, de ciertos jefes reconocidos. Para

(1) *Obras completas*, primera edición rusa, t. XI, II parte, páginas 13-22.

poner un remedio a esta situación era necesario elaborar una filosofía proletaria, crear una ciencia y un arte proletarios. La plataforma, en fin, rechazaba la acusación según la cual los otzovistas estaban contra el parlamentarismo en general, y aunque declarándose en desacuerdo con ellos desde el punto de vista práctico, juzgaba al otzovismo como un matiz legítimo entre los diversos matices del ala revolucionaria del partido, pues "la diversidad de matices en la unidad de los principios expresa la vitalidad y la profundidad de nuestra corriente de ideas".

En enero de 1910 se celebró en París, después de una larga interrupción, una reunión plenaria del Comité central, cuyo principal objeto era restablecer la unidad, ya rehecha por el Congreso de Estokolmo, pero prácticamente inexistente a pesar del deseo de la gran mayoría de los obreros conscientes. Una resolución sobre "la situación en el partido", adoptada por unanimidad, reclamaba la cesación de la lucha de fracciones, y la reducción de estas últimas a "tendencias que no pongan en peligro la unidad de acción del partido".

Sin embargo, esta resolución fué letra muerta tanto para el grupo de Vperiod como para los liquidadores. El grupo, después de ser reconocido, conforme a su deseo, por el Comité central, inauguró sus funciones de editor del partido publicando una carta "A los camaradas bolchevikis", en la cual, acentuando todavía más el desacuerdo, reprochaba a los leninistas "abandonar todas las posiciones bolchevistas una tras otra" y pasar prácticamente al menchevismo.

Entonces Lenin estimó necesario publicar una respuesta a la plataforma de Bogdánov. Como en la reunión se había decidido cesar la publicación de los órganos El Proletario y La Voz del Socialdemócrata (1), el artículo apareció en La Hoja de discusión, publicada por una redacción que comprendía un representante de cada una de las tendencias.

En la continuación de su artículo, Lenin, después de comprobar que incluso los que se lamentan de que se exagera el papel de la acción parlamentaria remachan siempre el clavo a propósito del mismo tema del par-

(1) Los liquidadores continuaron, no obstante, publicando ese periódico.

mentarismo y crean una fracción con este motivo, declara que esto es una especie de cretinismo parlamentario al revés. Lenin compara a los autores del informe con las gentes de Raboche Dielo; del mismo modo que estos últimos negaban hipócritamente la existencia del economismo, aquéllos niegan casi la del otzovismo, juegan al escondite. ¡Cuán menos peligrosos son los otzovistas francos!

Lenin se ocupa a continuación de los "constructores de Dios", los cuales, con sus amigos otzovistas, han fundado una escuela en Capri para los obreros del partido; en su derecho, puesto que tienen un matiz de pensamiento que defender, puesto que una organización del partido ha aceptado el patronato de esta empresa; pero lo que es intolerable es que engañen al partido no nombrando a los iniciadores y a los organizadores, Stanislas Volski, Lunacharski, Bogdánov, que son todo un programa.

En fin, Lenin prueba que los excluidos lo han sido legítimamente, y no por razones personales, como ellos dan a entender, después de haber sido varias veces derrotados en diversas reuniones, y concluye diciendo que no es posible ningún compromiso con esta nueva fracción de origen pequeño-burgués.

I

DE LA "PLATAFORMA" DE LOS PARTIDARIOS Y DE LOS DEFENSORES DEL OTZOVISMO

Recientemente ha aparecido en París, editado por el grupo *Vperiod* (1) un folleto intitulado: *La situación actual y los objetivos del partido* (plataforma elaborada por un grupo de bolcheviques). Se trata del mismo grupo de bolcheviques que ha fundado una nueva fracción, como la redacción ampliada de *El Proletario*

(1) Los *otzovistas*, para justificar su oposición al centro bolchevista, según ellos degenerado, tomaban como ejemplo la actitud de los bolcheviques de 1904, insubordinados contra el Comité central menchevizante; al dar a su grupo el nombre del órgano entonces publicado por Lenin, *Vperiod*, subrayan esta tesis.

NOTES OF A PUBLICIST

Published March 6 (19)
and May 25 (June 7) 1910
in *Diskussionny Listok*
Nos. 1 and 2
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to
the text in
Diskussionny Listok

I

THE "PLATFORM" OF THE ADHERENTS AND DEFENDERS OF OTZOVISM

A pamphlet published by the *Vperyod* group recently appeared in Paris under the title *The Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party. A Platform Drawn Up by a Group of Bolsheviks*. This is the very same group of Bolsheviks about whom, in the spring of last year, the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* declared that they had formed a new faction. Now this group, "consisting of fifteen Party members—seven workers and eight intellectuals" (as the group itself states), comes forward with an attempt to give a complete, systematic and positive exposition of its own special "platform". The text of this platform bears clear traces of careful, painstaking collective work in an effort to smooth out all rough spots, to remove sharp edges and to stress not so much those points on which the group is at variance with the Party as those on which it is in agreement with the Party. All the more valuable to us, therefore, is the new platform, as the official presentation of the views of the trend concerned.

This group of Bolsheviks first gives its own "interpretation of the present historical situation of our country" (§ I, pp. 3-13), then it gives its own "interpretation of Bolshevism" (§ II, pp. 13-17). And it interprets both the one and the other badly.

Take the first question. The view held by the Bolsheviks (and by the Party) is set out in the resolution of the December Conference of 1908 on the present situation. Do the authors of the new platform share the views expressed in that resolution? If they do, why do they not say so plainly?

If they do, why was it necessary to draw up a separate platform, to give an exposition of their own particular "interpretation" of the situation? If they do not share these views, then again why not state clearly in what particular respect the new group is opposed to the views held by the Party?

But the whole point is that the new group itself is rather hazy about the significance of that resolution. Unconsciously (or subconsciously) the new group inclines towards the views of the otzovists, which are *incompatible* with that resolution. In its pamphlet the new group does not give a popular exposition of all the propositions contained in that resolution, but only of a part of them, without understanding the other part (perhaps even without noticing its importance). The principal factors which gave rise to the Revolution of 1905 continue to operate—states the resolution. A new revolutionary crisis is maturing (clause "f"). The goal of the struggle is still the overthrow of tsarism and the achievement of a republic; the proletariat must play the "leading" role in the struggle and must strive for the "conquest of political power" (clauses "e" and "1"). The state of the world market and of world politics makes the "international situation more and more revolutionary" (clause "g"). *These* are the propositions that are explained in a popular manner in the new platform and *to that extent* it goes hand in hand with the Bolsheviks and with the Party, *to that extent* it expresses correct views and performs useful work.

But the trouble is that we have to lay stress on this "*to that extent*". The trouble is that the new group *does not understand* the *other* propositions of this resolution, does not grasp their connection with the rest, and in particular it does not perceive their *connection* with that irreconcilable attitude to otzovism which is characteristic of the Bolsheviks and which is not characteristic of this group.

Revolution has again become inevitable. The revolution must again strive for and achieve the overthrow of tsarism—say the authors of the new platform. Quite right. But that is not all that a *present-day* revolutionary Social-Democrat must know and bear in mind. He must be able to comprehend that this revolution is coming to us in a new way

and that we must march towards it in a new way (in a different way from the previous one; not merely in the way we did before; not merely with those weapons and means of struggle we used before); that the autocracy itself is not the same as it was before. It is just this point that the advocates of otzovism refuse to see. They persistently want to remain one-sided *and thereby*, in spite of themselves, consciously or unconsciously, they are *rendering a service* to the opportunists and liquidators; by their one-sidedness in one direction they are supporting one-sidedness in another direction.

The autocracy has entered a *new* historical period. It is taking a step towards its transformation into a bourgeois monarchy. The Third Duma represents an alliance with definite classes. The Third Duma is not an accidental, but a necessary institution in the system of this new monarchy. Nor is the autocracy's new agrarian policy accidental; it is a necessary link in the policy of the new tsarism, necessary to the bourgeoisie and necessary because of its bourgeois character. We are confronted by a *specific* historical period with *specific* conditions for the birth of a new revolution. It will be impossible to master these specific conditions and prepare ourselves for this new revolution if we operate only in the old way, if we do not learn to utilise the Duma tribune itself, etc.

It is this last point that the otzovists cannot grasp. And the defenders of otzovism, who declare it to be a "legitimate shade of opinion" (p. 28 of the pamphlet under review), cannot even now grasp the *connection* this point has with the *whole cycle of ideas*, with the recognition of the specific character of the present moment and with the effort to *take it into account* in their tactics! They repeat that we are passing through an "inter-revolutionary period" (p. 29), that the present situation is "transitional between two waves of the democratic revolution" (p. 32); but they cannot understand what it is that is *specific* in this "*transition*". However, unless we do understand this *transition* it will be impossible to survive it with advantage to the revolution, it will be impossible to prepare for the revolution, to *go over* to the second wave! For the preparation for the new revolution cannot be restricted to repeating that it is

inevitable; the preparation must consist in devising forms of propaganda, agitation and organisation that will take account of the *specific character of this transitional situation*.

Here is an instance of how people talk about the *transitional* situation without understanding what this *transition* actually is. "That there is no real constitution in Russia and that the Duma is only a phantom of it, devoid of power and importance, is not only well known to the mass of the population by dint of experience, it is now becoming obvious to the whole world" (p. 11). Compare this with the estimate of the Third Duma given in the December resolution: "The alliance of tsarism with the Black-Hundred landlords and the top commercial and industrial bourgeoisie has been openly recognised and solidified by the coup d'état of June 3 and the establishment of the Third Duma."

Is it really not "obvious to the whole world" that the authors of the platform did not, after all, understand the resolution, in spite of the fact that for a whole year it was chewed over and over again in the Party press in a thousand ways? And they failed to understand it, of course, not because they are dull-witted, but because of the influence over them of otzovism and the otzovist ideology.

Our Third Duma is a Black-Hundred-Octobrist Duma. To assert that the Octobrists and the Black Hundreds have no "power and importance" in Russia (as the authors of the platform do in effect) is absurd. The absence of a "real constitution" and the fact that the autocracy retains full power do not in the least preclude the peculiar historical situation in which this government is forced to organise a counter-revolutionary alliance of certain classes on a national scale, in openly functioning institutions of national importance, and in which certain classes are organising themselves from below into counter-revolutionary blocs which are stretching out their hand to tsarism. If the "alliance" between tsarism and these classes (an alliance which strives to preserve power and revenues for the feudal landlords) is a specific form of class rule and of the rule of the tsar and his gang during the present *transitional* period, a form created by the bourgeois evolution of the country amidst the conditions of the defeat of the "first wave of the revolution"—then

there can be no question of utilising the transition period without utilising the Duma tribune. The peculiar tactics of using the very tribune from which the counter-revolutionaries speak *for the purpose* of preparing the revolution thus becomes *a duty* dictated by the specific character of the *entire* historical situation. If, however, the Duma is merely the "phantom" of a constitution "devoid of power and importance", then there is really no *new* stage in the development of bourgeois Russia, of the bourgeois monarchy, or in the development of the form of rule of the upper classes, etc.; and in that case the otzovists are, of course, correct in *principle*!

Do not imagine that the passage we quoted from the platform was a slip of the pen. In a special chapter, "On the State Duma" (pp. 25-28), we read at the very beginning: "All the State Dumas have hitherto been institutions devoid of real power and authority, and did not express the real relation of social forces in the country. The government convened them under the pressure of the popular movement in order, on the one hand, to turn the indignation of the masses from the path of direct struggle into peaceful electoral channels, and, on the other hand, in order to come to terms in these Dumas with those social groups which could support the government in its struggle against the revolution." This is a sheer tangle of confused ideas or fragments of ideas. If the government convened the Dumas in order to come to terms with the counter-revolutionary classes, it follows at once that the First and Second Dumas had *no* "power and authority" (to help the revolution), whereas the Third Duma *possessed and possesses power* and authority (to help the counter-revolution). The revolutionaries could have (and in certain circumstances should have) refrained from participating in an institution which was powerless to help the revolution. This is indisputable. By bracketing together such institutions of the revolutionary period with the Duma of the "inter-revolutionary period", which has power to help the counter-revolution, the authors of the platform commit a monstrous error. They apply correct Bolshevik arguments to those very cases to which they are really inapplicable! This is indeed to make a caricature of Bolshevism.

In summing up their "interpretation" of Bolshevism, the authors of the platform have even put in a special clause "d" (p. 16), in which this "caricature" of revolutionariness has found, we might say, its classical expression. Here is this clause in full:

"d) Prior to the consummation of the revolution, no semi-legal or legal methods and means of struggle of the working class, including also participation in the State Duma, can have any independent or decisive importance, but only serve as a means of gathering and preparing the forces for the direct, revolutionary, open mass struggle."

This implies that *after* the "consummation of the revolution" legal methods of struggle, "including" parliamentarism, *can* have independent and decisive importance!

That is wrong. They cannot even then. The platform of the *Vperyod* group contains nonsense.

Furthermore, it follows that "prior to the consummation of the revolution" all means of struggle *except* the legal and semi-legal, i.e., *all illegal* means of struggle, *can* have independent and decisive importance!

That is wrong. There are certain illegal methods of struggle, which, even *after* the "consummation of the revolution" (for example, illegal propaganda circles) and "prior to the consummation of the revolution" (for example, the seizure of money from the enemy, or the forcible liberation of arrested persons, or killing spies, etc.), "*cannot* have any independent or decisive importance, but *only* serve", etc., as in the text of the "*platform*".

To proceed. What is the "consummation of the revolution" referred to here? Obviously, *not* the consummation of the socialist revolution, for then there will be no struggle of the working class, since there will be no classes at all. Obviously then, the reference is to the consummation of the *bourgeois-democratic* revolution. Now let us see what the authors of the platform "meant" by the *consummation* of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Generally speaking, this term may be taken to mean two things. If used in its broad sense, it means the fulfilment of the objective historical tasks of the bourgeois revolution, its "consummation", i.e., the removal of the very soil capable of engendering a bourgeois revolution, the consummation of the *entire cycle* of bourgeois revolutions. In this

sense, for example, the bourgeois-democratic revolution in France was *consummated* only in 1871 (though begun in 1789). But if the term is used in its narrow sense, it means a particular revolution, one of the bourgeois revolutions, one of the "waves", if you like, that batters the old regime but does not destroy it altogether, does not remove the basis that may engender subsequent bourgeois revolutions. In this sense the revolution of 1848 in Germany was "consummated" in 1850 or the fifties, but it did not in the least thereby remove the soil for the revolutionary revival in the sixties. The revolution of 1789 in France was "consummated", let us say, in 1794, without, however, thereby removing the soil for the revolutions of 1830 and 1848.

No matter how the words of the platform, "prior to the consummation of the revolution", are interpreted, whether in the wider or narrower sense, there is no meaning in them in either case. Needless to say, it would be altogether absurd to attempt now to determine the tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy *up to* the consummation of the whole period of possible bourgeois revolutions in Russia. As for the revolutionary "wave" of 1905-07, i.e., the first bourgeois revolution in Russia, the platform itself is forced to admit that "it [the autocracy] has beaten back the first wave of the revolution" (p. 12), that we are passing through an "inter-revolutionary" period, a period "between two waves of a democratic revolution".

Now what is the source of this endless and hopeless muddle in the "platform"? It lies in the fact that the platform dissociates itself from otzovism diplomatically without abandoning the ideology of otzovism, without correcting its fundamental error and without even noticing it. It lies in the fact that the Vperyodists regard otzovism as a "legitimate shade of opinion", i.e., they regard the otzovist shade of a caricature of Bolshevism as a *law*, a model, an unexcelled model. Anyone who has set foot on this sloping path is bound to slide into a bog of hopeless confusion; he *repeats* phrases and slogans without being capable of *pondering* over the conditions of their application and the limits of their importance.

Why, for example, did the Bolsheviks in 1906-07 so often oppose the opportunists with the slogan, "the revolution

is not over"? Because the objective conditions were such that the consummation of the revolution in the narrow sense of the word was out of the question. Take, for instance, the period of the Second Duma—the most revolutionary parliament in the world and probably the most reactionary, autocratic government. There was no direct way out of this except by a coup d'état from above, or by an uprising from below. And however much the sapient pedants may now shake their heads, no one could say beforehand whether the government's coup d'état would be successful, whether it would pass off smoothly, or whether Nicholas II would break his neck in the attempt. The slogan, "the revolution is not over", had a most vital, immediately important, practically palpable significance, for it *alone* correctly expressed things as they really were and whither they were tending by virtue of the objective logic of events. And now that the otzovists themselves recognise the present situation as "inter-revolutionary", is not the attempt to represent otzovism as a "legitimate shade of the revolutionary wing", "prior to the consummation of the revolution", a hopeless muddle?

In order to extricate oneself from this vicious circle of contradictions, one must not use diplomacy towards otzovism, but must cut the ideological ground from under it; one must adopt the point of view of the December resolution and think out all its implications. The present inter-revolutionary period cannot be explained away as a mere accident. There is no doubt now that we are confronted by a special stage in the development of the autocracy, in the development of the bourgeois monarchy, bourgeois Black-Hundred parliamentarism and the bourgeois policy of tsarism in the countryside, and that the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie is supporting all this. The present period is undoubtedly a transitional period "between two waves of the revolution", but in order to prepare for the second revolution we must master the peculiarities of this transition, we must be able to adapt our tactics and organisation to this difficult, hard, sombre transition forced on us by the whole trend of the "campaign". Using the Duma tribune, as well as all other legal opportunities, is one of the humble methods of struggle which do not result in anything "spectacu-

lar". But the transitional period is transitional precisely because its specific task is to prepare and rally the *forces*, and not to bring them into immediate and decisive action. To know how to organise this work, which is devoid of outward glamour, to know how to utilise for this purpose all those semi-legal institutions which are peculiar to the period of the Black-Hundred-Octobrist Duma, to know how to uphold *even on this basis* all the traditions of revolutionary Social-Democracy, all the slogans of its recent heroic past, the entire spirit of its work, its irreconcilability with opportunism and reformism—such is the *task of the Party*, such is the task of the moment.

We have examined the new platform's first deviation from the tactics set out in the resolution of the December Conference of 1908. We have seen that it is a deviation towards otzovist ideas, ideas that have nothing in common either with the Marxist analysis of the present situation or with the fundamental premises of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics in general. Now we must examine the second original feature of the new platform.

This feature is the task, proclaimed by the new group, of "creating" and "disseminating among the masses a new, proletarian" culture: "of developing proletarian science, of strengthening genuine comradely relations among the proletarians, of developing a proletarian philosophy, of directing art towards proletarian aspirations and experience" (p. 17).

Here you have an example of that naïve diplomacy which in the new platform serves to cover up the essence of the matter! Is it not really naïve to insert *between* "science" and "philosophy" the "strengthening of genuine comradely relations"? The new group introduces into the *platform* its supposed *grievances*, its accusations against the other groups (namely, against the orthodox Bolsheviks in the first place) that *they* have broken "genuine comradely relations". Such is precisely the *real* content of this amusing clause.

Here "proletarian science" also looks "sad and out of place". First of all, we know now of only one proletarian science—Marxism. For some reason the authors of the platform systematically avoid this, the only precise term, and everywhere use the words "scientific socialism" (pp. 13, 15,

16, 20, 21). It is common knowledge that even outright opponents of Marxism lay claim to this latter term in Russia. In the second place, if the task of developing "proletarian science" is introduced in the platform, it is necessary to state plainly just what ideological and theoretical struggle of our day is meant here and whose side the authors of the platform take. Silence on this point is a naïve subterfuge, for the *essence of the matter* is obvious to everyone who is acquainted with the Social-Democratic literature of 1908-09. In our day a struggle between the Marxists and the Machists has come to the fore and is being waged in the domain of science, philosophy and art. It is ridiculous, to say the least, to shut one's eyes to this commonly known fact. "Platforms" should be written not in order to gloss over differences but in order to explain them.

Our authors clumsily give themselves away by the above-quoted passage of the platform. Everyone knows that it is *Machism* that is *in fact* implied by the term "proletarian philosophy"—and every intelligent Social-Democrat will at once decipher the "new" *pseudonym*. There was no point in inventing this pseudonym, no point in trying to hide behind it. In actual fact, the most influential literary nucleus of the new group is Machist, and it regards non-Machist philosophy as non-"proletarian".

Had they wanted to speak of it in the platform, they should have said: the new group unites those who will fight against non-"proletarian", i.e., non-Machist, theories in philosophy and art. That would have been a straightforward, truthful and open declaration of a well-known *ideological* trend, an open challenge to the other tendencies. When an ideological struggle is held to be of great importance for the Party, one does not hide but comes out with an open declaration of war.

And we shall call upon everyone to give a definite and clear answer to the platform's veiled declaration of a philosophical struggle against Marxism. *In reality*, all the phraseology about "proletarian culture" is just a screen for the *struggle against Marxism*. The "original" feature of the new group is that it has introduced *philosophy* into the Party platform without stating frankly *what* tendency in philosophy it advocates.

Incidentally, it would be incorrect to say that the real content of the words of the platform quoted above is wholly negative. They have a certain positive content. This positive content can be expressed in one name: Maxim Gorky.

Indeed, there is no need to conceal the fact already proclaimed by the bourgeois press (which has distorted and twisted it), namely, that Gorky is one of the adherents of the new group. And Gorky is undoubtedly the greatest representative of *proletarian* art, one who has done a great deal for this art and is capable of doing still more in the future. Any faction of the Social-Democratic Party would be justly proud of having Gorky as a member, but to introduce "proletarian art" into the *platform* on this ground means giving this platform a certificate of poverty, means reducing one's group to a literary *circle*, which exposes itself as being precisely "authoritarian".... The authors of the platform say a great deal against recognising authorities, without explaining directly what it is all about. The fact is that they regard the Bolsheviks' defence of materialism in philosophy and the Bolsheviks' struggle against otzovism as the enterprise of individual "authorities" (a gentle hint at a serious matter) whom the enemies of Machism, they say, "trust blindly". Such sallies, of course, are quite childish. But it is precisely the Vperyodists who mistreat authorities. Gorky is an authority in the domain of proletarian art—that is beyond dispute. The attempt to "utilise" (in the ideological sense, of course) *this* authority to bolster up Machism and otzovism is an *example* of how one should not treat *authorities*.

In the field of proletarian art Gorky is an enormous *asset* in spite of his sympathies for Machism and otzovism. But a *platform* which sets up within the Party a separate group of otzovists and Machists and advances the development of alleged "proletarian" art as a special task of the group is a *minus* in the development of the Social-Democratic proletarian movement; because this platform wants to consolidate and utilise the very features in the activities of an outstanding authority which represent his weak side and are a negative quantity in the enormous service he renders the proletariat.

En el arte proletario, M. Gorki es una fuerza inmensa, a pesar de sus simpatías por el *machismo* y el *otzovismo*. En el desenvolvimiento del movimiento socialdemócrata proletario, la plataforma que aísla en el partido al grupo de los *otzovistas* y de los *machistas*, afirmando como objetivo especial del grupo el desenvolvimiento del arte que se pretende "proletario", es una debilidad, pues esta plataforma quiere consagrar y utilizar precisamente lo que de la actividad de un hombre rodeado de autoridad constituye su lado débil, lo que entra como una grandeza negativa en la suma de servicios inmensos que presta al proletariado.

(*La Hoja de discusión*, núm. 1, 6/19 de marzo de 1910).

FIN

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL
18 JUL. 1961
Secc. Control y Cat.

EDICIONES EUROPA-AMERICA

LENIN : Páginas escogidas (La campaña por el programa, la táctica y la organización del partido), *tomo I.*

LENIN : Páginas escogidas (El partido bolchevique en acción), *tomo II.*

John REED : Diez días que estremecieron el mundo.

FADEIEV : La Derrota (novela).

LENIN : Páginas escogidas, *tomos III y IV* (en preparación).

BIBLIOTECA MARXISTA

La BIBLIOTECA MARXISTA es el primer esfuerzo que se hace para dar a conocer en lengua española las obras fundamentales del marxismo.

La BIBLIOTECA MARXISTA publicará como mínimo seis volúmenes por año, debidamente impresos, traducidos directamente, y con una serie de notas explicativas que facilitarán el estudio.

APARECERÁN INMEDIATAMENTE:

PLEJANOV : Anarquismo y Socialismo.

LENIN : El Estado y la Revolución (Edición del Instituto Lenin de Moscú).

PLEJANOV : El Socialismo y el movimiento político.

LENIN : El imperialismo, última etapa del capitalismo.

LAPIDUS y OSTROVITIANOV : Tratado de economía política.

YAROSLAVSKY : Historia del Partido Comunista ruso.